

# Saints take rampaging Bulls by the horns

Paul Fitzpatrick at Wembley

**B**EFORE Saturday, when Bradford's young captain Robbie Paul deservedly took the honour, no one since David Toplis had won the Lance Todd Trophy for the Challenge Cup final's best player and finished on the losing side.

The workaholic Toplis had done his best to inspire Wakefield Trinity against Widnes in 1979, but that was one of Wembley's more mean-spirited years; a dour low-scoring final was characterised by the most un-rugby league like action of Bill Kirkbride, the Trinity coach, who at the end locked his players in (and the press out) of the dressing room.

The contrast with Saturday could not have been greater. Doors were open everywhere, including a few in the respective defences, and the sunshine streamed in. Expansive is hardly the word. The previous highest aggregate of points — 52 in the Wigan-Hull final of 1985 — was swamped.

Even on a hot day there was no pause for breath; the excitement was unremitting and the plot in doubt until the end; and for Paul there was the unique achievement of scoring three tries in a Wembley final, a feat that earned him a cool £10,000 from the sponsor.

That particular barrier was bound to fall some time but it was probably no coincidence that it should fall on Saturday. Summer rugby, hard grounds and the 10-metre rule offer a recipe for scoring orgies. But is there a danger of saturation?



Gripping stuff... Anthony Sullivan, of St Helens, is brought down to earth by Bradford's Karl Fairbank in one of Wembley's most memorable Challenge Cup finals

Anyone watching the code for the first time on Saturday could not have failed to be captivated by the quality of the touchdowns, 13 of them, and the pace, skill, discipline and physical honesty of it all. But the game needs to guard against a devaluation of the try.

Not that there was anything base about Master Paul's three scores. They were brilliantly taken, the last one the result of an audacious piece

of individualism. The Paul brothers, Bradford's Robbie and Wigan's Henry, have barely begun their careers but they look destined for a place among the immortals.

Robbie might well have had a winner's medal to go with his other booty had it not been for a horrendous spell in the second half when Bradford saw a winning position of 26-12 evaporate.

Brian Smith, Bradford's coach,

talked a lot afterwards about pain, about its refining qualities and about the character to cope with it. Poor Nathan Graham knows exactly what he was on about.

Early in the second half the Bulls' full-back, far from fulfilling pre-match predictions as a potential weakness, was in the running for the Lance Todd. Then, in seven mortifying minutes, he was transformed into as forlorn and as soli-

itary a figure as Don Fox, the one who famously missed from the posts in 1968.

Three times Graham failed a defuse high "bombs" put up with wicked precision by Bobbie Goulding, the Saints' scrum-half and captain. Cunningham, Booth and Pickavance were the beneficiaries of Graham's misfortune and, as Goulding suddenly finding the kicking a cinch, Saints turned a 14-point deficit into a four-point lead.

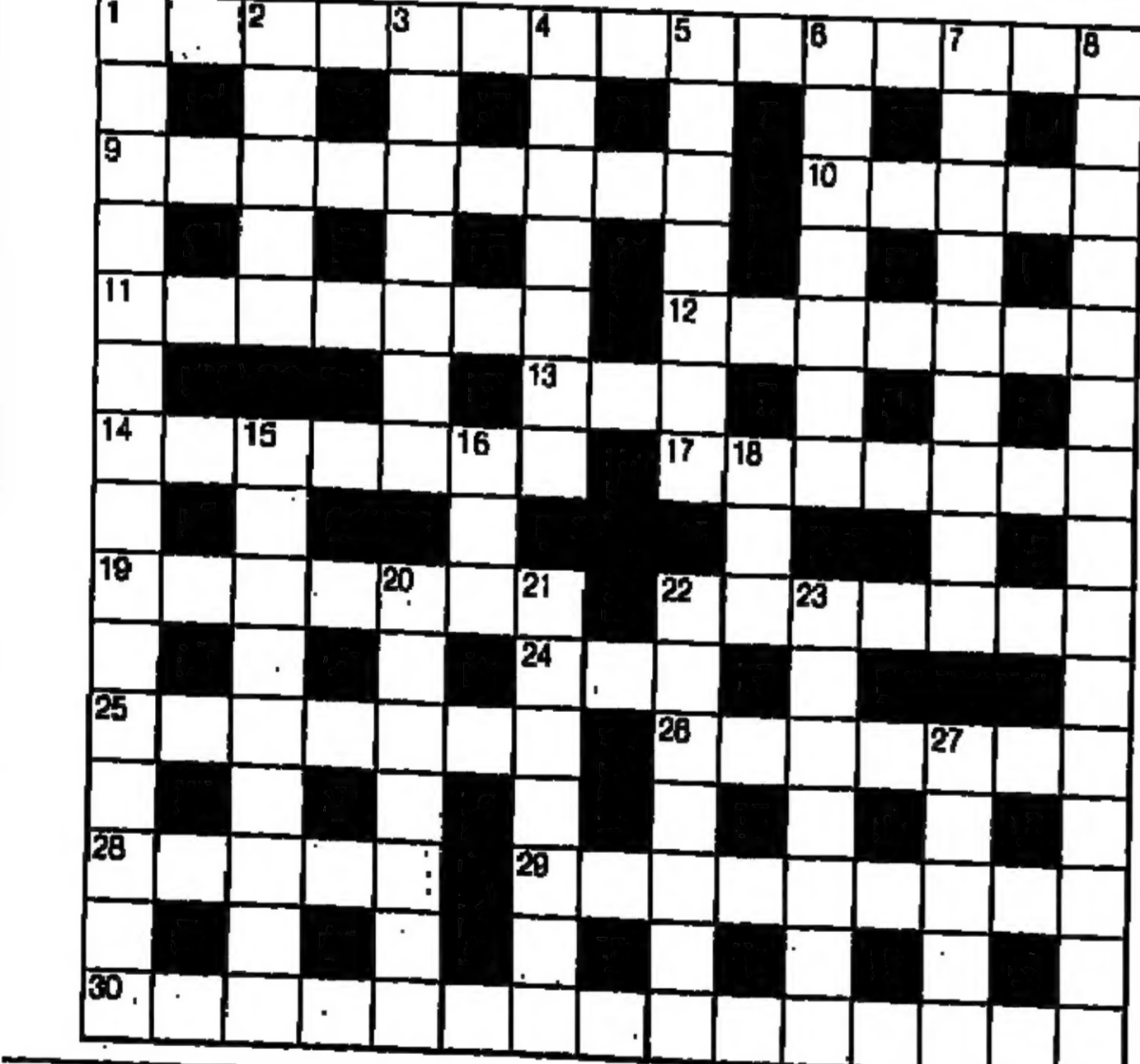
After only 18 minutes St Helens had collected two tries at that stage the St Helens half was the raging favourite for a £10,000 hat-trick prize. But by the time Bradford had worked its nerves and the errors out of the system, the argument as to whether there was any case for firing Jon Hamer had been irrelevant, and they led 14-12: fine tries from Scales and Paul's three goals from the imposed Cook.

Few Wembley finals have so, so violently as this one in the second half, and even when Paul crashed through for Saints' sixth try five minutes from time, the favourites could not be sure that brave Bulls did not have a fight charge left.

But for Saints and their followers this was rich compensation for deep disappointments of 1987, 1988 and 1991. Their coach, Sir McKee, said: "The point now is that it should not be a one-off. We need to do well in the Super League to come back here next year and defend this title."

Saints, the Super League leaders, will now concentrate on holding Wigan's challenge over the remaining 17 weekends of the first super Rugby League season.

## Cryptic crossword by Gordius



- Down**
- When it's fixed the time is at hand (6, 5, 5)
  - Insult to wast country town's not on (5)
  - First mount overtaken by similar one near Lewes (7)
  - Signs of power? (7)
  - Turpin's push-over also included accompanying words (5, 2)
  - Diana merits a break (7)
  - Threatening child with finality (9)
  - He hopes to have business for life (9, 6)
  - English advanced in vain before mating call (9)
  - A letter from 2... (3)
  - ... but first a drink (3)
  - To work fast is beneath the fashionable rich (7)
  - Greated with a bit of luck instead for a change (7)
  - Called family in to establish pecking order (7)
  - Unofficial strike after leading fireman holds the sheet (7)
  - Organ featured in 15 (5)

- Across**
- Drunk on brewer's liquor, politician enters excellent defence (10, 5)
  - Lost reptile brought back by no fellow on Lammes Day (9)
  - Twenty pasetas will include all sorts (5)
  - Symbolic reflection one found in bed (7)
  - Class remains undisciplined (7)
  - Bird feared by Euro-sceptics? (3)
  - Publicity avoids involving Diana's initial... (7)
  - ... failure to answer charge
  - of strong emotional involvement (7)
  - Love? Give us a ring about it—we've no feelings (7)
  - One who may expect some refusal to start granting easy entry (7)
  - Was she taken from Adam? (3)
  - With 17, turning us into byways... (7)
  - ... and not therein, for a change (7)
  - They say it's light to lift (5)
  - Quango to consider military equipment? (5, 4)
  - Priest waggled finger at alternative entertainer (15)

**Last week's solution**

DISTANCE GANDER  
 B T S A A R I E  
 T R E A S U R E I S L A N D  
 A A H I F O T P  
 G A D G E C A L A N D R I A  
 H Y C A A I C  
 C O N T E M P T I B L E  
 D O C U M E N T A R Y  
 I L L U S T R A T I O N  
 A U T H O R I T Y  
 P U R C H A S E R E A C H  
 I O T O L D  
 Q U A N T I T Y W O O D I N G  
 B E E F O U U U  
 S E T T L E C R O S S M A N

## Moscow exposes nine British 'spies'

James Meek in Moscow and Richard Norton-Taylor

**T**HE MOST serious crisis in British-Russian relations since the end of the cold war loomed this week after Moscow threatened to expel nine British diplomats it accuses of spying. Britain warned Russia it planned a "significant" response if its diplomats were ordered to leave.

Russia's threat came after a triumphant announcement by the Federal Security Service (FSB) — the intelligence agency which succeeded the KGB — that it had arrested a British spy in the act of broadcasting secret information to his controllers in London.

Russia's deputy foreign minister, Sergei Krylov, confirmed that there would be expulsions, but refused on Monday to specify the number of Britons who would be ordered to pack their bags.

Grigory Karasin, Mr Krylov's spokesman, said later that the incident should not be dramatised. "Such cases sometimes happen in relations between countries," a ministry spokesman told the Interfax news agency.

The UK Foreign Secretary, Malcolm Rifkind, said there would be a "significant" response if Russia pressed ahead and expelled British diplomats. He said it-for-at expulsions were a possibility. "Absolutely no evidence has been given to our ambassador [Sir Andrew Wood] nor to the United Kingdom to support any allegations and, as far as we are concerned, these allegations are unjustified," he said.

Alexander Zdanovich, chief FSB spokesman, told the Itar-Tass news agency that the message handed to the British ambassador "described in detail the activity of each of the listed spies and gave documentary evidence about their contacts with a Russian citizen who had been arrested for spying for Great Britain".

Comment, page 12



Precious cargo... A baby is lifted up to fleeing Liberians packing a ship at Monrovia's port. About 2,000 people left on an overloaded Nigerian freighter on Sunday, heading for Ghana. US marines opened fire to protect their embassy when fighting spread in the Liberian capital on Monday. Heavy overnight rain brought a hull on

Tuesday as faction representatives and West African mediators gathered for a summit in Ghana. The main faction leader, Charles Taylor, who has said he will not attend the peace talks, announced a unilateral ceasefire, but sporadic gunfire continued throughout Monday.

## Conservatives thrashed in local elections

Patrick Wintour and Rebecca Smithers

**B**BRITISH Conservatives suffered their second worst performance in local election history last week. They faced nationwide reverses, including the symbolic loss to Labour of Basildon, the former citadel of Thatcherite Essex Man.

Overall, the Tories lost 573 seats, with Labour gaining control of 10 more councils, and the Liberal Democrats another seven.

Labour's performance appeared to be especially strong in the south of England, even if its overall share of the vote may have fallen to 44 per cent, down two points from last year. The Conservatives were up two points on last year to 27 points, but still trailed Labour by an unprecedented 17 points only 12 months away from the general election.

Liberal Democrats, enjoying a sixth successive year of gains, trailed the Tories in overall share of the vote by just one point, a chilling figure for many Tory MPs.

Conservatives were also stung by a wipe-out on 30 councils, leaving a total of 50 — one in nine — without any Tory councillors. Big cities, including Oxford, Manchester and Newcastle, as well as key southern new towns such as Slough and Harlow, are "Tory-free zones".

The Conservative leader, John Major, made it clear he thought the party's fortunes would be boosted by the improving economy. Asked if he would consider resigning, he replied: "I am going to stay here right through the general election. I think we can win that general election. I am going to bend all my efforts to winning."

Hugo Young, page 10

## Yeltsin promises poll will go ahead

David Hearst in Moscow

**G**ENNADY Zyuganov, the Russian Communist leader and main challenger to Boris Yeltsin, has called on all candidates in next month's presidential election to sign a pact to abide by the outcome.

Mr Zyuganov made his call on Monday after a rocky 24 hours in Russian politics sparked by the suggestion by the president's chief bodyguard and closest political confidant, Lieutenant-General Alexander Korzhakov, that the election be postponed. Gen Korzhakov claimed the vote could lead to a civil war.

Gen Korzhakov was overruled by Mr Yeltsin who said on Monday the election would go ahead. But Mr Yeltsin characteristically muddled the waters by conceding the general was not alone in believing a Communist victory could spark turmoil. The president's pledge was

swiftly welcomed by the Clinton administration. "We've stressed the importance of the June 16 election and the certainty of the democratic process," the White House spokesman, Mike McCurry, declared.

Whether the Communists were returned to power, was "a question for the Russian people to address in a free and fair election".

Speaking in Bonn, Mr Zyuganov said: "We must guarantee the elections are carried out in a strictly democratic, honest and legal fashion, and at the same time sit around a table with all the parties and movements and sign an agreement that the outcome of the election, as expressed by voters, will be sacred."

Earlier, Mr Yeltsin was anything but convincing about his pledge to respect the wisdom of Russian voters. "Korzhakov is not alone in thinking that a victory of Zyuganov would be the start of a civil war," he said.

authorities understand that they are losing."

Mr Yeltsin's clique of advisers has every reason to fear a change in Kremlin management, not least because they know how easily in the past he has come to pragmatic deals with his political opponents. A recent meeting with Mr Yavlinsky has sparked rumours that Mr Yeltsin offered him the post of prime minister in return for his support.

Mr Yeltsin is still trailing by six points in the opinion polls, having made up much lost ground. But his populist promise, made in Yekaterinburg a month ago, to pay off the entire backlog of unpaid wages in March, has not worked. Only 20 per cent of the arrears have been paid, and Mr Yeltsin continues to face a hostile reception from pensioners.

Mr Yeltsin has invited separatist Chechen field commanders to talks with Russia's prime minister, Viktor Chernomyrdin, and the Moscow-backed leader of Chechenia, Doku Zavgayev.

Nations fail to ban land-mines	3
Balkans aim to profit from refugees	4
Jewish groups pry open Swiss banks	7
Journey to Burma's gulag	22
Reds head for historic double	30

Austria	AS30	Malta	450
Belgium	BF75	Netherlands	G 4.75
Denmark	DK18	Norway	NK 16
Finland	FM 10	Portugal	E300
France	FF 15	Saudi Arabia	SR 6.60
Germany	DM 40	Spain	P 300
Greece	DR 400	Sweden	SK 18
Italy	L 3,000	Switzerland	SF 3.30

## Poverty causes famine, not a shortage of food

**I** FOUND your Environment section (April 28) particularly depressing reading. But not, as you might think, because I feared its imminent, doom-laden predictions. Unfortunately, it was the litany of Malthusian myth and factual error which affected my demeanour.

John Adams claims to have used a tonne of aviation fuel to get to Vancouver (he must have been the only person on the plane). Strangely enough, it is the most technologically advanced nations which have done most to preserve their environments and address social inequalities: rather the reverse of what he suggests.

Tim Radford then predicts a crisis in food production — despite continuing excesses in world supply over demand in the past 20 years. Famine, in case you didn't know, is caused by poverty, not lack of food. Singaporeans do not starve (yet they produce little food), but food exports from Ireland or Ethiopia did not mean the people could afford to eat.

He then includes the extraordinary statement that oil supplies will run out in 50 years — known reserves continue to grow, the price continues to fall.

Finally, he rounds off a piece on water by suggesting that there is "no substitute". When I last looked, 70 per cent of the Earth's surface was water. It can be (and in many countries is) desalinated. This is expensive, but an expensive substitute is still a substitute.

It seems that "greens" have quite literally taken upon themselves the role of religious revivalists: perhaps in the traditions of Hebraic prophets or Puritans. The key elements of this are: ominous warnings of divine retribution (in this case, ecological

or social catastrophe); a censorious attitude to the things that most people enjoy; and the promise of salvation if these things are renounced.

It makes it all too easy to dismiss their message when facts are subordinated to the requirements of this unholy trinity. This is a pity, because some important messages get lost. If environmental issues are to be taken seriously, they will have to be discussed in a more clear-headed way.

Tom Marshall,  
Copenhagen, Denmark

**I**T IS very refreshing to see the articles in the Environment section (April 28). But why are these articles stuck together in a special section on their own as though they had no relevance to anything else in the paper?

Why are the considerations in these articles not allowed to influence the orthodox deregulation-global market "sustainable" growth slant which informs most of the rest of the articles and analysis in the Weekly, week in, week out?

(Dr) John Leonard,  
Woden, ACT, Australia

**T**IM RADFORD (Why meat will soon be off the menu, April 28) writes about the expanding population of the undeveloped world (where a couple's prestige and pension depend on many sons), but is mistaken in expecting the population of the United States to double.

Nowhere in the overdeveloped world (where a wife must work to pay the mortgage) does the average size of women's completed families reach the 2.2 necessary to keep up the present population. This applies

to the US, Japan, the Tiger economies, and all of Europe, both East and West. Italian women, for example, average only 1.6 children.

The ageing populations of these countries will still grow a little as old people like myself live a little longer than our parents did, but then the populations will reduce. As further countries become industrialised they too will exchange expanding population for the novel problems of declining population.

Geoff Laet,  
Thurso, Scotland

## American view of the world

**T**HE problem with Americans, particularly those living in Japan, is that they think they're the only country of any worth in the world. While Americans are failing to build sound relationships with the Japanese, the Japanese are (albeit slowly) building relationships with more than just Americans.

Americans in Japan who are ignorant of anything but themselves are a recurring source of annoyance to us non-Americans in Japan. To that end, the Japanese government's JET programme brings over 4,000 people from English-speaking countries as well as China, Korea, Brazil, France, Germany and others; not just "2,000 young Americans" (Washington Post, April 28).

The sooner Americans learn a little more about the world in which they supposedly enjoy superpower status, the sooner the Japanese (and the rest of us) will stop referring to "bloody Americans".

Shreevani Ravivadera,  
British JET, Aomori, Japan

**P**ETER MORGAN of Barbados (April 7) wonders how we in the US can tolerate our government "being regarded as the world's Big Bully". I assume Mr Morgan has never spent any length of time here and that friends from this country are atypical.

Gore Vidal, one of our most perceptive writers, calls us the most heavily propagandised people in the world, and it's true. From an early age we're brainwashed into thinking that our country is the font of all goodness and is always acting out of altruism. They really do walk around believing this fairy tale. The very notion that we thought-bully someone is like Orwell's Thought-crime: totally outside the realm of possible consideration for most US citizens.

The US media is heavily controlled by the military-industrial complex that also controls the government. In addition, large amounts are spent to promote 'jingoism, xenophobia and anti-intellectualism in a continuous drumming-down of our population.

This self-enforced, aggressive ignorance is the source of all our problems, as well as those problems we so frequently cause other countries.

Chris Sorochin,  
Port Jefferson, New York, USA

## Distant songs of England

**N**OTE with some alarm the recent decline in British songbirds (Comment, April 28). These statistics reinforce the noticeable increase in the silence of the English

countryside found on recent visits to the UK.

Ironically, many of these same species have enjoyed notable success when transplanted overseas. For example, skylarks appear to be reaching almost pest proportions in the tablelands of New South Wales, Australia, and I observed more song thrushes on a recent visit to New Zealand than on several trips to the UK.

Although numerous theories exist for the growth of introduced species in the absence of their natural predators, the increase of these populations must also to some extent reflect their adaptability to changing (if also deforested) environments. In this respect the decline of such species in the face of changing agricultural practices in the UK is all the more worrying. We can only hope that the recent emphasis on sustainable agriculture and the search for more pest-specific pesticides will again make our countryside more "bird friendly".

Many of these species were introduced to Australia and New Zealand by ill-informed "acclimatisation societies". Although the aim of these societies must have been to make their newfound homes more "English", few could have predicted that their avifauna could eventually become more English than England itself.

Richard French-Constant,  
Canberra, Australia

## Chilly warning to emigrants

**T**O BRITS considering emigrating to Australia after reading Catherine Bennett's article (April 28): the climate is not beautiful. Don't be deceived by travel agents, or Australian soaps; even in South Queensland sea-bathing is a chilly business; in arctic Victoria there are not four neat seasons, but at least six months of relentless cold and wet, and buildings seldom have adequate heating, the inhabitants being firmly convinced they live in a tropical climate. "Summer" can be grumpy and icy too.

Look at Australia on the map ("what an ugly shape", as Oscar Wilde remarked). How could such a big continent have just one climate? And since it elected a "Liberal" government two months ago, Australia has voted itself savage cuts to jobs and welfare. The grass is not greener over here.

Rosemary Evans,  
St Kilda, Victoria, Australia

## UN democracy?

**V**ICTORIA BRITAIN (The UN needs a fresh leader, April 28) raises an important question: who is to be the next secretary-general? There is another, equally critical, question. How is he or she to be chosen?

Article 97 of the UN Charter says only that "the Secretary-General shall be appointed by the General Assembly upon the recommendation of the Security Council". The present system of secret lobbying is not inimitable.

The UK government would do the world a service if it raised the issue in Parliament and canvassed the views of NGOs, which have consultative status with the UN. It's time to introduce the UN to democracy.

Bruce Kent,  
Fornhill for UN Renewal, London

## Briefly

**H**AVING had to waste hours of my time on Handke in the course of reading for an external German degree, I was deeply shocked to find that the Guardian Weekly has wasted one of its so valuable pages on this Austrian bore (April 28).

He is one of that race of pseudo-intellectuals who persuade people who do not like "accepted wisdom" that anything which goes against that wisdom is necessarily correct. Handke's uncritical defence of all things Serbian — which includes large numbers of massacres in the last few years — is typical of his woolly, affected way of drawing attention to himself.

NA Metcalfe,  
St Blasien, Germany

**I**SEE that the United States has restated its list of nations that are supposed to be guilty of "state-supported terrorism": Cuba, North Korea, Sudan, Libya, Iraq, Iran and Syria. Many of us were taught that modesty is a virtue. But I really do think that the United States should not be so concerned about modesty as to leave itself off the list.

John Gillins,  
University of Toronto, Canada

**R**EGARDING your Washington Post article about the death of Jessica Dubroff (April 21), I cannot believe that a child would forcibly insist on taking off in adverse conditions, and that the two adults in the plane would defer to her decision.

Instead of passing legislation against juvenile pilots, why not pass a law that would stop self-serving, egotistical, idiotic adults from flying?

Ann Ashley,  
Vancouver, BC, Canada

**I**CAN understand that a country wants to preserve its identity, but I find it a little odd that Great Britain, a country which both politically and geographically belongs to Europe still appears to be denying the fact. Why "European ban on British beef" (as opposed to "Other members of the European Union" or even "Continental")?

Wim Pol,  
The Netherlands

**M**ANY a transportation magazine, including Paul Martin, Canada's finance minister, has ships registered in Liberia. While the current civil war is under way, are ships' registration fees being collected? If so, who do they benefit? Do they amount to enough to make a difference? Or are they, in fact, a facilitious, indeed a flagitious, fiction functioning in the final analysis as a fragmentiser of the fractious factions?

David Walmsley,  
Vancouver, Canada

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## Nationalists in India poised for success

Suzanne Goldenberg  
in New Delhi

**I**NDIANS voted in the last main round of general elections on Tuesday, and while they are unlikely to deliver a decisive verdict, they have signalled growing support for a rightwing Hindu party once confined to the margins of public life.

Opinion polls have been saying the Bharatiya Janata Party will win most seats in what will probably be a hung parliament. The party, which has struggled for acceptance as a credible alternative to the ruling Congress, is at last being seen as a potential party of government.

A poll in the Times of India at the weekend, however, suggests that the BJP's surge has lost steam. Muslims and other communities, alarmed at the prospect of a BJP government, are throwing their support behind anyone with a chance of beating the party's candidates.

The BJP has tried recently to ingratiate itself with Muslims. But it is still seen as the party which provoked the wave of religious fervour that led to the destruction of a historic mosque in Ayodhya in December 1992. Dalits (formerly "untouchables") and low-caste Hindus also seem unimpressed by the BJP's efforts to win them over.

## Australia aims to curb TV violence

Bradley Perrett in Canberra

**A**USTRALIAN politicians called on Monday for a crackdown on violent television and video games as well as tighter gun controls following last week's massacre in Tasmania which left 35 people dead.

The prime minister, John Howard, told parliament the federal government wanted a national ban on all automatic and semi-automatic guns, allowing a six-month amnesty for owners to surrender them and mandatory jail for those who do not.

But the new gun laws to be worked out with state leaders this week would not be the only solution, he said. "The causes of that dreadful event lie deeper than simply the inadequacy of our gun control laws," Mr Howard said. "They go to aspects of the kind of society we are, they go to issues concerning violence on the screen and in videos. They also... raise legitimate questions about contemporary attitudes towards the treatment of mental health problems."

A gunman armed with a high-powered rifle killed 35 people at the historic Port Arthur convict site 50km southeast of Hobart in Tasmania. It was Australia's worst mass murder since atrocities committed against Aborigines last century.

The Queensland state police minister, Russell Cooper, from the conservative National Party, also called for investigations of violent television. "We have to be looking at those things as well because I think it does upset people's minds in many respects," he said. — *Router*

Comment, page 12



People queue to vote in Moradabad in India's northern state of Uttar Pradesh. PHOTOGRAPH: KAMAL NISHORE

The poll gave the Congress 169 seats, the BJP 165, and the National Front-Left Front alliance of regional parties 145 seats in the 543-seat parliament.

Sundar Singh Bhandari, the BJP's vice-president, said the party was determined to try to form a government by roping in regional allies. Unallied regional parties will be crucial in forming the government.

The past 12 years have seen a spectacular rise in the fortunes of the

BJP, which was previously shunned for its association with the Hindu fanatics who assassinated Mahatma Gandhi in 1948. It won only two seats in the 1984 elections, but had 119 MPs in the last parliament.

The party's rise represents a backlash by Brahmins and other upper-caste Hindus against affirmative action programmes for Dalit and low-caste Hindus. "This unprecedented anger was encouraged by the BJP and used by the BJP to

consolidate their hold on the Hindu upper castes," said Purushotam Aggarwal, an associate professor at Delhi's Jawaharlal Nehru University. "The BJP will continue to be a significant force in Indian society because it represents the vested interests of Hindu society."

Unlike the Congress, which has promised to carry on with economic reforms begun in 1991, the BJP is ambivalent about the entry of foreign firms into India's markets.

## Calls for land-mines ban ignored

Owen Bennett Jones in Geneva

**T**WO years of international negotiations ended last week with failure to secure a global ban on the use of land-mines. Despite agreement on new restrictions, the United Nations secretary-general, Boutros Boutros-Ghali, described the outcome as deeply disappointing.

An inter-governmental conference revising the 1980 UN Convention on Weapons Convention outlawed undetectable anti-personnel mines and put restrictions on the use of other "smarter" mines, but a total ban on anti-personnel mines — sought by more than 30 governments, the UN and the Red Cross — will have to wait.

The next review conference of this convention will take place in five years' time," Dr Boutros-Ghali said. "Our estimate is that, by the year 2001, an additional 50,000 human beings will have been killed and a further 80,000 injured by land-mines."

The UN leader's strongly worded attack was backed up by non-governmental organisations, which described the final text agreed at the conference as an outrage.

John Hooper in Rome

**I**N TYPICALLY flamboyant yet subtly equivocal fashion, Umberto Bossi, the leader of the Northern League, has put the future of Italy's rich north back at the top of the political agenda only weeks after a general election threatened to sideline his movement.

Politicians of the left and right

## Spain's PM prescribes austerity

Adela Gooch in Madrid

**S**PAIN'S new conservative prime minister, José María Aznar, was sworn in at the weekend, bringing the first change in government in almost 14 years.

The cabinet he named includes two independents as defence and justice ministers, and a balance of spenders and slashers in economics, which he says will be his priority.

Last week he outlined a tough programme of financial austerity, less bureaucracy and greater backing for business — aimed at meeting European monetary union targets.

Mr Aznar, leader of the centre-right Popular Party (PP), insisted that some key institutions, including the legal system, state television and civil service, needed to be changed to fight corruption and safeguard democracy.

He was voted into office with Catalan, Basque and Canary Island MPs providing the majority that he failed to achieve in the general election on March 3.

In a parliamentary debate, Mr Aznar said his priorities would be to slash spending and encourage growth as first steps towards reducing unemployment — the highest in the European Union — and to curb the budget deficit.

He insisted he would protect the welfare system guaranteeing health care and pensions. But his references to privatisation, tax reforms, and changes to labour laws, making it easier to dismiss workers, will not please the unions. They have warned they will fight attempts to cut welfare benefits.

He stressed that he was committed to reducing the budget deficit from 5.9 per cent to 3 per cent by 1997. Most economists believe it will be virtually impossible to do this merely by fighting fraud and reducing administration costs.

Even if the annual growth targets of 3 per cent are met, Mr Aznar will almost certainly have to trim welfare costs and is said to be considering introducing charges for health care.

Corruption, which brought the defeat of his Socialist predecessor, Felipe González, also figured. Mr Aznar said his administration would account "for every peseta".

He had a stern warning for Britain. His administration would be tough on "drug trafficking and money laundering in Gibraltar", he said, and would press Spanish claims to the Rock with vigour.

The resolution also approved the creation of an umbrella group — the Padania Liberation Committee — and opened the way for the election of a 10-strong "government" by the next session of the parliament.

Romano Prodi, the man who is most likely to be Italy's new prime minister, said Mr Bossi's remarks were "terrible". The Pope, on a pastoral visit to the north, begged Roman Catholics to work for the "common good of the entire national community".

Comment, page 12

The Week

PRESIDENT Nelson Mandela defused a threatened crisis in South Africa by persuading Chief Mangosuthu Buthe to accept a month's postponement of local elections in KwaZulu-Natal. But the main political parties are in a deadlock over a new constitution. Martin Woolcott, page 12

NIGERIA'S military rulers have retired dozens of air force and navy officers a few weeks after scores of army officers were swept out.

BAT industries, the tobacco and financial services combine, said booming cigarette sales had helped boost profits for the year to \$900 million — a 16 per cent jump.

THE leftwing Sandinista National Liberation Front overwhelmily picked the former president, Daniel Ortega, as its presidential candidate for Nicaragua's general elections on October 20.

PRESIDENT Clinton is to bypass Congress and use his executive power to impose a reform that would slash welfare for teenage mothers who leave home and drop out of school. Washington Post, page 16

RED CROSS official and a doctor visited 11 hostages held since January by separatist rebels in Indonesia's Irian Jaya province.

ETHNIC tensions in Burundi heightened following reports of a massacre of 235 Hutu civilians by the mostly Tutsi army.

THE US Senate passed a bill to crack down on illegal immigrants at the border and in the workplace, and stiffen rules to keep them off welfare benefits.

LIU GANG, one of the most prominent pro-democracy dissidents to flee China, has been granted permission to stay temporarily in the US.

A WAVE of arson attacks hit Bahrain, destroying two shopping malls and badly damaging other buildings in an escalation of anti-government protests.

VOTERS in the eastern German state of Brandenburg snubbed Berlin and decided to reject a merger with the future capital to form a federal state.

THE body of the former CIA chief, William Colby, was washed ashore on a river bank south of Washington, nine days after neighbours reported him missing.

RUSSIA has arrested a scientist in Siberia for manufacturing and smuggling nuclear material abroad.

Balkans refugee 'tax' angers Germany

Ian Traynor in Bonn

THE governments of Bosnia and Serbia are seeking to capitalise on the plight of hundreds of thousands of Balkan refugees sheltering in Germany by demanding payment to allow them to return home, according to government and relief organisation officials in Bonn.

Manfred Kanther, Germany's tough-talking interior minister, said the Bosnian government was blocking negotiations on repatriation between Bonn and Sarajevo and demanding payment for the proposed returnees.

Local authority leaders in government-controlled parts of Bosnia — almost all under the control of President Alija Izetbegovic's ruling Muslim Democratic Action Party — were stipulating that each returnee from Germany bring "taxes" of up to DM10,000 (\$6,600), a well-placed official disclosed.

There are at least 320,000 refugees from the war in Germany, about 7.5 per cent of Bosnia's pre-war population and a figure that eclipses the number of Bosnians scattered across the rest of the European Union.

Mr Kanther is anxious to see them begin to return, arguing that they are testing the limits of German generosity and hospitality. But he was forced to concede last week that his deadline of July 1 for the beginning of deportations was no longer practicable, given the fragile condition of the Bosnian peace process and the halting pace of the civilian reconstruction effort.

Mr Kanther also attacked the Serbian government of President Slobodan Milosevic for blocking the return of thousands of other migrants to Germany, and for trying to exact payment for co-operation.

Ethnic Albanians from the tense Serbian province of Kosovo are pouring into Germany at the rate of more than 2,000 a month, according to the United Nations High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR).

A durable coexistence of Muslims and Croats in a common federation was "far from assured", the

report warned. The return of refugees was meeting "massive resistance from local Croats". The report envisaged a bleak future for Bosnia and anticipated the persecution of non-Serbs returning to areas under Serb control.

The UNHCR estimates that as many as 70 per cent of the 320,000 Bosnian refugees in Germany are Muslim victims of Serb ethnic cleansing, drummed out of their lands in areas now under Serb control.

Most will be unable to return to their native areas and will need to be accommodated in the Muslim-Croat federation, but that plan is generating fierce Croat opposition.

Officials from the five-power "contact group" on Bosnia — the United States, Russia, Germany, France and Britain — met in Frankfurt on Sunday to discuss the refugee crisis. The head of the UNHCR, Sadako Ogata, began a tour of Bosnian hotspots on Sunday in an attempt to galvanise the repatriation process.

A confidential German foreign ministry report that helped Mr Kanther decide to delay ejecting the Bosnians warned that a mass return of refugees from abroad could sink the ailing federation.

Washington Post, page 15



Held back... Police rescue a Vietnamese child whose mother tried to jump with her from a navy ship last week as Malaysia forcibly deported 126 boat people to Vietnam. PHOTOGRAPH: MIKE FALA

Nobel poet faces sex lawsuit

Martin Walker in Washington

BOSTON University is to back its star professor, the Nobel prize-winning poet Derek Walcott, and become his co-defendant at a sexual harassment trial instituted by a female former student.

The stage is set for a drama of sexual and racial politics, in which the focus will be the West Indian poet's claim that unscrupulous women find it easy to destroy the reputations of prominent men with spurious charges.

The student, in her 30s, claims Prof Walcott, aged 66, told her she would fall his course unless she had sex with him. He was reprimanded when he taught at Harvard after another female student made a similar

allegation. Prof Walcott, claiming that the teaching of poetry and drama was touched by the inherent drama of the subjects, then acknowledged that his "deliberately personal and intense" style might have been misunderstood.

After a lengthy internal investigation of this latest incident, Boston University has concluded that the charges are without grounds. "We entirely believe Mr Walcott's version," officials said.

Nicole Niemi, a former television journalist, filed the charge after quitting Prof Walcott's Masters degree drama course in February. She filed a private suit for emotional distress, compensation for her university fees, and punitive damages, and is seeking more than \$500,000.

Beijing fears chaos in Hong Kong

Andrew Higgins in Hong Kong

A SECRET Chinese report on the future of Hong Kong has warned the Communist Party to brace for riots, a slump in foreign investment and other perils when Britain pulls out next year, a Hong Kong magazine reported last week.

An independent Chinese-language monthly, Cheng Ming, quoted what it said was a leaked Chinese document as saying Britain would play the "democracy card" to prolong colonial influence after 1997.

The internal report was said to have been prepared by China's Hong Kong and Macau Affairs Office. Its authenticity could not be confirmed, though its logic matches that of Beijing conspiracy theories.

It said "anti-Chinese and anti-communist forces" in the United States and Taiwan could stir up trouble after 1997 to undermine China's stability. "Violent and armed turmoil leading to the paralysis of Hong Kong society could occur." It predicted a drop of between 20 and 30 per cent in foreign investment.

Amid fading hopes for a smooth transfer of sovereignty, the shadow British foreign secretary, Robin Cook, on a visit to the colony pledged to help non-Chinese ethnic minorities to secure the right of abode in Britain.

He said the Labour party would press the Government to make an "unconditional" offer of sanctuary to the 3,000-5,000 people who will be effectively stateless after 1997. But he offered scant solace for the bulk of Hong Kong's 6.4 million people, rejecting more British passports for ethnic Chinese.

Meanwhile, Hong Kong's chief secretary, Anson Chan, confirmed that the colony had rejected Chinese demands for help in replacing a legislature elected under Governor Chris Patten's reforms "with a body picked by Beijing". A Chinese request for "necessary" co-operation for a provisional legislature was refused.

Peres digs in over attack on UN base

Derek Brown in Jerusalem

THE Israeli prime minister, Shimon Peres, dismissed renewed claims on Monday that Israeli gunners fired deliberately at a United Nations base in Lebanon packed with refugees.

The new accusations are backed by an amateur UN video of an Israeli unmanned spy plane flying near the Qana camp in South Lebanon as it was being pounded by artillery on April 18.

Mr Peres stuck by the Israeli army's version of events: a spy plane was flying in the vicinity but was not over the camp. "The army was very careful with its story and the army admitted when it made a mistake. We made a mistake. We are terribly sorry... But we insist the information that was given is correct," he said.

More than 100 Lebanese civilians died in the attack on Qana, and the much vaunted Israeli capacity for precision strikes was gravely undermined by the hideous carnage at the UN camp, in which the presence of refugees was public knowledge.

The confirmation that a pilotless "drone" was operating in the area of the camp at the time is further ammunition for critics, who say the firing was at best cynically callous, and at worst deliberate.

That the shells hit a UN post, said one senior officer in the aftermath of the massacre, was "a regrettable miss and not bad decision-making". Palestinian and Israeli negotiators on Monday ended their first, largely symbolic, talks on a permanent peace settlement at the Egyptian resort of Taba. The talks will resume after the Israeli general election on May 29.

Meanwhile, Israeli soldiers shot and wounded nine Palestinians in clashes with demonstrators protesting against Israeli land confiscations at the self-ruled enclave of Qalqilya in the West Bank, officials said.

Tudjman seeks to stifle his critics

Julian Borger in Zagreb

THE CROATIAN government has intensified its campaign against critics in the press and local government, closing an independent newspaper and dissolving the opposition-led Zagreb city council last week, less than a fortnight before the country formally joins the Council of Europe, a forum for the promotion of democracy and human rights.

Panorama, a weekly tabloid, was closed by the financial police. The official reason was violation of property and environmental laws, but the decision came only days after the newspaper printed a critical

profile of President Franjo Tudjman.

Two days earlier, Zagreb's city council was dissolved, after being elected last year with an opposition majority. President Tudjman had already made it clear he would not surrender control of the capital, by vetoing — on "national security" grounds — four nominee mayors put forward by the opposition.

When the Council's assembly voted to admit Croatia last week despite its patchy human rights record, European diplomats in Zagreb said the move would strengthen Croatian moderates and increase Western leverage on the government.

But a United Nations human rights monitor said that the govern-

ment's recent actions demonstrated that Croatia's admittance had only served to weaken the West's influence. "The government promised the council it would make improvements on 21 points concerning human rights... It has done nothing — if anything the situation is worse. But they let them in. What is the point?"

The official added that when the council accepted Russia as a member in January, it forfeited grounds for denying membership to Croatia, whose human rights transgressions pale in comparison. Croatia's formal entry is due to be finalised by European officials meeting in Strasbourg next week, but the Netherlands is arguing for a postponement because of the fragile state of the Balkan peace settlement.

The Panorama closure comes less than a month after another independent newspaper, Novi List, was fined more than \$1.5 million for allegedly evading customs duty on printing equipment. Its editors deny any wrongdoing.

The Tudjman government has also had a poor record on the treatment of minorities, in particular Serbs. Hundreds of Serb civilians were killed after the government stormed the separatist region of Krajina last year. Human rights officials say about 20,000 Croatian Serbs, who fled during the offensive, have applied to resettle in their former homes, but only a handful have been allowed to return.

There is little doubt that President Tudjman is personally involved

in the campaign against dissent. He intervened repeatedly to veto opposition candidates for the post of Zagreb's mayor, saying opposition leadership in the capital would weaken Croatia. Political observers point out that once the liberal opposition controlled Zagreb city hall, it would be in a position to expose long-suspected corruption in the privatisation process.

Mr Tudjman appears to be drifting towards the far right as next year's presidential elections approach. And with the president showing no intention of bowing out, a new, more democratic Croatia may take a long time to emerge.

The Bosnian government has arrested two Muslims indicted by the UN war crimes tribunal for killing Serbs at a prison camp in 1992, the tribunal said last week.

Pirate CFCs stall ozone recovery

Robin McKie

RUSSIAN criminals have created a black market trade in ozone-destroying chemicals to illegally replenish the air conditioning systems of gas-guzzling American cars.

More than 15,000 tons of these illegally manufactured chlorofluorocarbons (CFCs) are brought into the US annually and distributed through hundreds of garages. The banned chemicals are the second most lucrative commodity smuggled through Miami, with supplies worth more than \$300 million sold each year nationwide.

The scale of the black market in CFCs — which are used in old cooling plants, refrigerators and air conditioning units — threatens to wreck the international agreement aimed at halting the depletion of Earth's ozone layer, warns a report to be published this week by the Royal Institute of International Affairs.

The problem was last week described as "worrying" by Dr Joe Farman, who first discovered that CFCs — which interact with chemicals in the upper atmosphere — have punched holes in the ozone layer over the North and South Poles, allowing harmful ultra-violet radiation to reach the ground.

The institute report says CFC smuggling has flourished because criminals have been able to exploit the US's predilection for cars with powerful air conditioning systems. Ninety per cent of US cars have such units, compared with 10 per cent of European models.

In the US, new cars are fitted with cooling systems that use a range of refrigerants not linked with ozone layer damage. Old models, which used CFCs that are now banned in the US, have to be retro-fitted. This is an expensive procedure, however, and retrofitting costs can range from \$300 to \$800 a car.

The problem is worsening because although the ozone layer is expected to continue being depleted until 2000, after that it should slowly recover as long as CFC production takes effect. But the recovery is threatened by the global black market trade in these chemicals.

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# Pumped up by memories of '70s



The US this week

Martin Walker

THE COUNTRY, and a very much smaller circle of influential people around President Clinton, were both rocked by echoes from the 1970s. One was odd, a little flurry at the petrol pump. The other was haunting, the death and funeral of a little-known American whose life since the seventies explains a great deal about the shaping of modern politics. In combination, the two events became a jarring collision between the ridiculous and the sublime.

Clinton went to a funeral, to join the conservative Republican Senator John McCain in giving the eulogies for David Iahin, who died of lung cancer at the young age of 47 on the eve of May Day. Clinton's presence was to be expected, as an old friend and political ally, who had known Iahin since they worked on the McGovern presidential campaign in 1972. McCain's presence at the funeral was less predictable, and helps to reveal one of the most dramatic political odysseys of modern American life.

It was in 1970, as a prisoner of war in Hanoi, that the Navy pilot John McCain first came across Iahin, speaking on Hanoi radio about American war crimes against North Vietnam. Iahin's broadcast was then used as an instrument of psychological torture against McCain, and the other downed American pilots.

Iahin had travelled to Hanoi as president of the National Student Association, having just graduated as an English major from Syracuse university, where he had been president of the student body at a time of widespread campus revolt and anti-war activism. Fifteen years later, Iahin walked into McCain's Senate office to apologise, to state that he had been duped and mistaken, and that what he had done in Hanoi was "a wilful delusion — I am as appalled as anybody else by what I did".

The two men became firm friends, and jointly founded the Institute for Democracy in Vietnam, the body which campaigned successfully to restore diplomatic relations between the US and Hanoi.

Iahin's conversion from the politics of the anti-war left came when he fled the US in despair at the reelection of President Richard Nixon, and went to work and live on a kibbutz in Israel.

At the time of the Yom Kippur war of October 1973, as Israel fought for its life against simultaneous attacks from Egypt and Syria, Iahin found himself unloading ammunition from the US Air

force later recalled, "almost an epiphany, the realisation that American warplanes and weaponry were a force for good, for a cause that he believed in."

He returned to the US, went to law school, and became one of the country's leading experts on electoral law, developing a mastery over the various arcane regulations for getting on the ballot in all the states, which became essential electoral tools in both the Mondale and later the Clinton campaigns.

By 1992, Iahin had become one of the most important figures connecting American Jewish organisations to the Democratic party. Since 1985, he had been general counsel and a director of the American-Israel Public Affairs Committee, by far the most influential arm of the pro-Israel lobby. He was also on the board of the Coalition for a Democratic Majority, a movement which sought to steer the party back to the electable centre of politics.

Some on the left of the party had never quite forgiven Iahin for his renunciation of the anti-war movement. The issue remains deeply divisive for many of the Vietnam movement veterans who have risen to prominence within the Clinton administration.

Prime among them was Harold Ickes, who is now deputy chief of staff at the White House, and who in 1992 was running the Clinton campaign in the New York primary election, a crucial hurdle on the way to securing the Democratic nomination. Clinton was a battered candidate, bruised by scandal, and the complex ethnic stew of New York was proving resistant to his political appeal.

Ickes, a prominent lawyer (and also the son of President Roosevelt's Secretary of the Interior), was in despair, when Iahin came to the rescue. In effect, Iahin delivered the power of the Jewish lobby to Clinton. He called on all the leading fund-raisers, all the main rabbis, organised lobbying teams to every synagogue, cashed in favour after favour he was owed from his AIPAC days.

Clinton's New York campaign verged on parody. He wore a yarmulka, promised to open a *glatt kosher* kitchen in the White House, called on a rigidly Orthodox synagogue in Brooklyn where the women were segregated behind a screen, and declared, "This is a wonderful occasion for me, just like every Saturday night at an Arkansas barbecue". Iahin, who later joked that this had been "the most successful Jewish offensive since the Yom Kippur war", delivered the victory, but was then eclipsed and then passed over for the ambassadorship to Israel, or any other prominent post that he might have deserved.

But Iahin's surprising absence from the senior ranks of the Clinton administration was in a tragic way to be repaired before his death. Last November, at the time of Thanksgiving, Iahin was told he had lung cancer. He and his wife Gail had three young children, and were nervous about their future. The friends rallied round. A large trust fund was collected, and in the first week of April, the entire Iahin family was invited to stay at the White House, in the Lincoln bedroom, and Clinton



Iahin was buried amid those other echoes from the past, the old times of 1973 and 1979. Not that there were any lines of angry drivers waiting outside America's gas stations, nor any Arabs sheikhs being burned in effigy. But the Republicans did their best to whip up some good old-fashioned outrage at the soaring cost of oil.

There was a modest rise in the petrol price, from an average of \$1.12 for a gallon of unleaded and self-served regular on February 9, to an average \$1.28 on April 28. Although in some markets such as California prices rose more sharply, gasoline in the US is still extremely cheap.

There is no political decision behind this latest modest increase in the price of gasoline. There has been no Opec resolution, and no new revolution in the Middle East. There have, instead, been a series of market forces at work. The price of West Texas intermediate crude oil was \$16 a barrel in January, and \$23 a barrel by April 18.

THERE are three immediate reasons for this: America had a hard winter, and refineries produced more heating oil later into the season than usual, so retaining less refining capacity for car fuel. Then there was an accident last month which temporarily cut production at one of the biggest refineries in California. Finally, Saddam Hussein is bickering with the United Nations over the terms on which he will be allowed to sell a fixed amount of oil on the world market.

The oil market is trying to calculate the impact of at least a billion dollars worth of Iraqi oil being put on sale. So while waiting for Saddam to make the price drop, nobody in the oil business wants to buy oil at the current high price. Stocks have been cut back to a minimum, with the result that there has been a series of shortages, worse in markets like California than in others.

When a motorist pays \$3.50 a gallon as the British do at the petrol pump, or \$4 a gallon like the French and Germans, or almost \$5 like the Italians and Japanese, a little price hiccup of another 10 or 20 cents is hardly noticed. But Americans are spoilt, paying less than half the British price, and conventional political wisdom says they get very aggrieved about paying more.

This may be wrong. Ross Perot was not howled down when he recommended a 50-cent-a-gallon tax increase to the electorate of 1992. Incidentally, every extra cent on the gas tax raises roughly \$1,000 million for the US Treasury. If the US motorist paid British gas prices, there would be no federal budget deficit this year. There would, instead, be a surplus of about \$10 billion, and Detroit might start to lead the world in producing lean, fuel-efficient engines.

Still, the White House knew that a political fiasco was coming, and prepared for it by announcing the sale of 12 million barrels from the strategic oil reserve. This was never going to flood the market with gasoline. In fact, the Saudis usually pump that amount in 36 hours. But it was enough to reassure an overheating spot market that relief was only a presidential gesture away, even while the Republicans demanded a repeal of the Clinton gas tax of 4.3 cents a gallon, imposed in the 1993 budget.

But all this is really practice for the medium- to long-term price rise that is beginning to look inevitable. There is a new market force on the block that could take oil prices back up to \$30 a barrel and more within the next five years.

The most important economic statistic of the decade was that, in 1994, China ceased to be a net exporter of food and energy and became a net importer. And when 1.3 billion people start simultaneously clamouring for the food and energy chains, interesting things start happening to prices.

pared with 32 barrels a head in Germany, and 53 barrels a head in the US). The lowest estimates for China's growth now suggest consumption is doubling to 10 barrels a head in 2000. That would mean China importing an extra 6 billion barrels a year, or 16 million barrels a day — twice the current production of Saudi Arabia.

China, moreover, is not the only market where demand is surging. India's more modest growth rates have shrouded the implication that the world's second most populous nation is following the consuming patterns of the first. If China can be expected to match the oil consumption of the US by 2005, India can be expected to match the consumption of western Europe.

DOUBTLESS the market will adjust to take care of the shortages, and increase the oil exploration rate. But the world does seem to be heading for the most dramatic period of commodity price inflation since the 1970s. Oil, after all, is only the half of it. China is also importing much more food, as more than a billion people make a new long march from a subsistence diet of rice to sweet aubergine, pork and Big Mac hamburgers.

The prospect is not of a gloomy repetition of that overdue seventies nightmare of gross shortages and mass famines, but of steady increases in the prices of food and energy. Whereas the issue in 1973 could be encapsulated in the image of a charity poster that depicted a starving Ethiopian child, it can now be symbolised by a more glibly vertiginous photograph of a mobile telephone wielded by a Chinese villager as he drives his gas-guzzler down some future motorway to Shanghai.

It is not the threat of poverty confronts us, but the sudden and startling challenge of prosperity to billions of people. All the time, less time than it took David Iahin to get to the White House, the movement of epiphany during the Yom Kippur war which shocked the US

# Swiss banks open up to Jewish groups

Ian Katz in New York

SWISS bankers have agreed to open their jealously guarded curtain of secrecy to allow Jewish groups to hunt for millions of dollars believed to have been deposited before and during the second world war by Holocaust victims.

Under an agreement signed last week in New York, a team of independent auditors will be given "unfettered access to all relevant files" held by the Swiss financial institutions, where many European Jews opened accounts to protect their assets from the Nazis.

Elan Steinberg, executive director of the World Jewish Congress, said the agreement would be "a milestone if the letter and spirit are carried out". Representatives of the Congress, the Jewish Agency in Jerusalem, and the Swiss Bankers' Association flew to New York to sign the two-page document.

Jewish organisations and relatives of those killed by the Nazis have been fighting for years to be allowed to search the records of Swiss banks for accounts which have lain dormant since the war.

They claim that Swiss banks have grossly underestimated the sums deposited by Holocaust

victims. In September, the Swiss Bankers' Association said a survey of its members had identified \$34.1 million, in some 775 accounts, which appeared to belong to Jews later killed by the Nazis.

Jewish organisations claim that the true figure may be as high as \$7 billion, pointing out that the Swiss Bankers' Association figures do not include accounts opened by Swiss nationals who may have been acting for Jews from other European countries.

Pressure on the Swiss authorities for a more open investigation of wartime accounts has

come from President Clinton and the Senate banking committee, which held hearings on the issue late last month.

Under last week's agreement, a team of six members — three appointed by Jewish groups and three by the banks — will supervise the auditors' hunt for dormant accounts.

The deal is a step towards resolving a long dispute between international Jewry and the Swiss banks. Many heirs of Holocaust victims believe the banks have tried to hide behind their secrecy laws to avoid restoring the money to its rightful owners.

Ironically, Switzerland framed its famous financial secrecy laws in the 1930s precisely to attract Jewish customers like the European Jews.

The auditors face a huge task. They plan to examine the records for all accounts opened in Swiss banks between the early 1930s and the mid-1940s which have shown no activity since then.

Recently released documents have identified 182 accounts opened by Romanians in one Swiss bank alone. Totalling around \$2 million when the deposits were made, the sum is estimated to have swollen to \$20 million with interest.

Where heirs cannot be found to claim the money, the funds will go to charities.

# Dramatic fall from grace for French 'saint'

Paul Webster in Paris

ABBE PIERRE, who only a month ago was seen as a living saint, has plunged from being France's most popular figure to its national pariah, accused of casting doubt on Nazi crimes against Jews.

The Franciscan priest, aged 83, who smuggled Jews out of France during the second world war and influenced both Socialist and Gaullist governments, has been rejected by the Catholic Church, the Jewish community, human rights organisations and his closest friends.

For more than 50 years, Abbe Pierre, whose real name is Henri Grouès, fought a lonely battle for the poor and homeless through his world-wide Emmaus organisation.

His campaigns became enmeshed with those of three other human rights evangelists: Bernard Kouchner, the former humanitarian affairs minister; Jacques Gallot, the former Bishop of Breux; and Leon Schwartzberg, a crusading cancer expert.

All three have turned on him publicly since he criticised the prosecution of philosopher Roger Garaudy, aged 83, whose book, *The Founding Myths of Israel*, questions the extent of the Holocaust.

Abbe Pierre defended himself in Liberation, after saying Mr Garaudy had the right to express his views. He denied accusations of anti-Semitism and called for debate on the accuracy of Holocaust research.

His defence had the effect of changing embarrassed reaction into a furious condemnation, intensified by a unanimous media assault.

The League Against Racism and Anti-Semitism told the priest to resign from his committee. Jean Kahn, the president of the Jewish Consistory, echoed the chief rabbi, Joseph Struck, by calling the priest's attitude "dramatic, disappointing and unacceptable".

The Gaullist justice minister, Jacques Toubon, expressed official disapproval, while the Archbishop of Paris, Jean-Marie Lustiger, led Catholic bishops in denouncing Abbe Pierre's "scandalous" support for Mr Garaudy.

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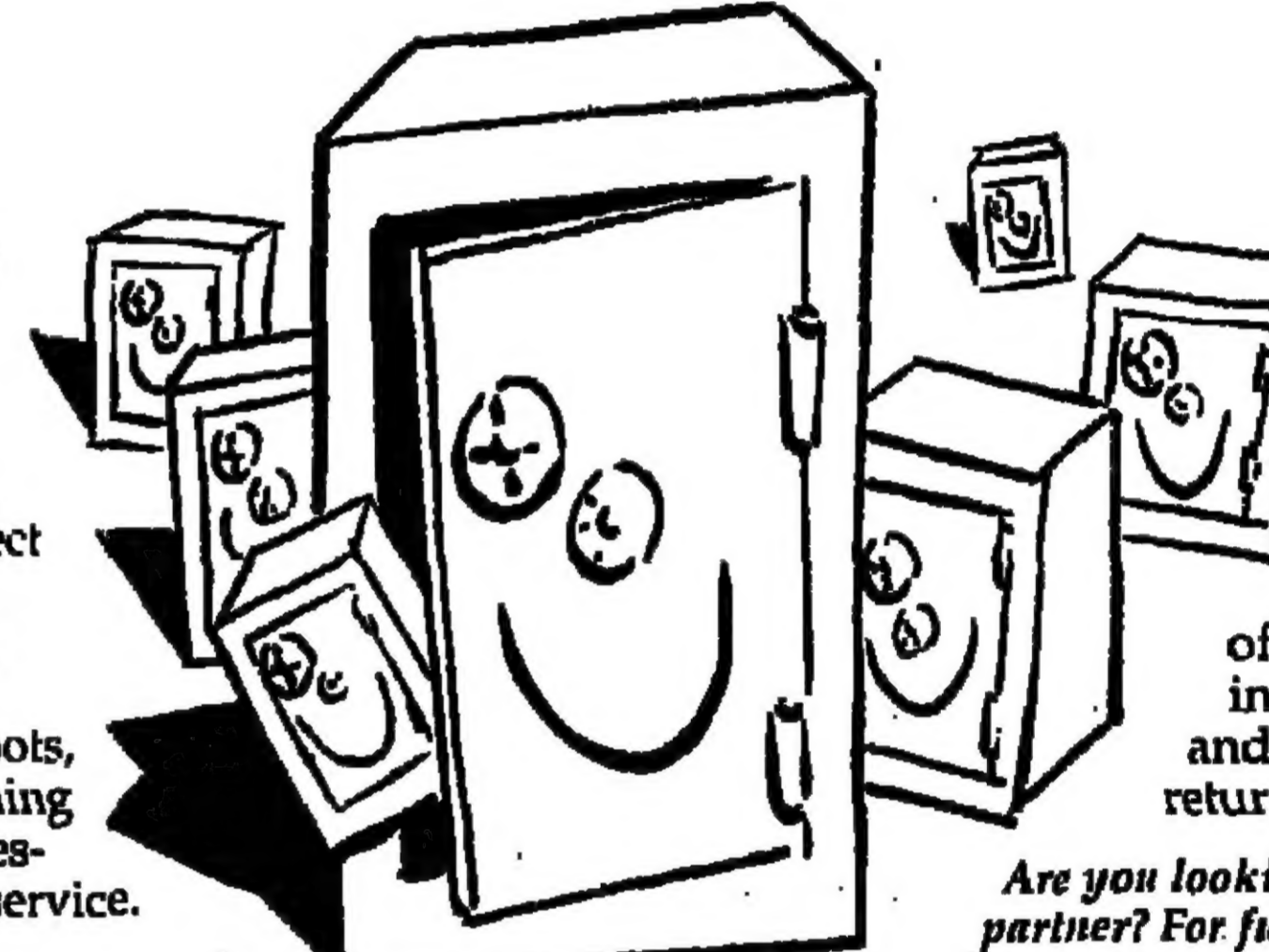
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Shahin & Liba

The Week in Britain James Lewis

## Howard and the judiciary continue to cross swords

**T**HE Home Secretary, Michael Howard, suffered yet another defeat at the hands of the judiciary when the High Court ruled that he had acted unlawfully in fixing a 15-year minimum sentence on two boys who killed a two-year-old toddler, James Bulger.

In a crime which caused public revulsion, Robert Thompson and Jon Venables, both then aged 10, abducted their victim from a Merseyside shopping centre and murdered him on a railway line. The trial judge ordered that they be "detained at Her Majesty's pleasure", recommending that they should serve at least eight years in prison. The Lord Chief Justice increased that to 10 years and Mr Howard, responding to various public petitions — one drummed up by a tabloid newspaper — upped it again to 15 years.

Ruling against Mr Howard in the High Court, Lord Justice Pill said it was wrong to treat young offenders as though they were adults. Mr Howard reacted with fury, and said he would appeal against the decision, which "flew in the face of judicial practice and precedent". He would even legislate, if necessary, to "preserve the supremacy of Parliament". The likelihood is, however, that either course of action would eventually be overturned by the European Court of Human Rights.

Underlying the Bulger case is a long-running battle between Mr Howard and the judiciary over the Home Secretary's repeated interference in sentencing and parole decisions. Last week's ruling followed a trend set by a series of court decisions which have diluted the role of the Home Secretary and the executive in deciding how long people convicted of murder and serious crimes should stay in prison.

**A** GIRL of 13, who went to the aid of a friend embroiled in a fight with other teenagers, was repeatedly kicked about the head in the incident near a funfair and later died in hospital. Two teenage girls, aged 12 and 13, respectively, have been charged with the manslaughter of the girl, Louise Allen, of Corby, Northamptonshire.

Louise's death focused attention on violent bullying among girls, which is said by the charity, Kidscape, to have risen by 50 per cent since 1993.

Delwyn Tatum, head of a unit at Cardiff which studies bullying, said that girls had turned to aggression. "Girls are forming their own gangs and carrying knives more," he said. "If we present women as being more aggressive and thrusting, then we must not be surprised if some girls misinterpret the role of females in society today and become aggressive and violent."

**T**HE Channel Tunnel operator, Eurotunnel, may be in severe financial difficulties — its pre-tax loss for 1995 of £925 million was one of the worst results in corporate history — but its Le Shuttle operations are a cause of mounting concern to the rival ferry companies.

P&O reported last week that passenger numbers on its Dover-

Calais route had fallen by nearly a fifth over the year (from 1.9 million to less than 1.6 million) and that the number of cars using the service had fallen by nearly a quarter to 292,780. Stena Sealink, the Swedish-owned ferry operator, which has also seen its market share dented by Eurotunnel's Le Shuttle service, last week announced price cuts on its duty-free goods.

Mergers between ferry companies seem inevitable, but P&O and Stena both deny they have any plans to merge. Three years ago P&O yielded to government demands and gave undertakings that it would not merge with rivals. It now wants to withdraw the undertakings, which were instigated to preserve competition and help Eurotunnel to establish itself.

**C**HANNEL 4 at the last minute withdrew a TV programme, Psychoanalysing Diana, due to have been shown this week. The commercial television station said the programme would not be broadcast in any shape or form.

Several newspapers had savaged the programme after seeing preview tapes of a Freudian case study in which psychoanalyst Dylan Evans probed a Princess Diana look-alike, using the princess's published words.

The questions were said to deal with the princess's childhood and youth problems, her alienation from Prince Charles, her love-hate relationship with the media, her bulimia and her desire to be the "Queen of Hearts".

Channel 4's director of programmes, John Willis, explained: "This was a very innovative concept. In the end, [controller] Michael Grade and I decided that the idea did not work."

**D**RUG USE in Britain is "substantially higher" among young whites than among blacks of the same age, according to a Home Office report. It concludes that an upsurge in drug-taking among whites in their late teens and 20s means that the image of Afro-Caribbeans as having the highest drug use is "passing into history".

A survey conducted in 1994 found that 43 per cent of whites aged 16-29 said they have taken illegal drugs, compared with 34 per cent of Afro-Caribbeans of the same age.



## Zulu boy must leave 'white mum'

David Boresford in Johannesburg, and Alex Bollos

**A** TRAUATIC, trans-global tug-of-war between a Zulu father and an English widow came to an end on Sunday when an ecstatic Charles Mahlangu welcomed his 10-year-old son back to South Africa from Britain.

But the boy was still clearly traumatised by his departure from Britain, which was delayed on Friday last week when he was taken off a British Airways flight, crying for his would-be adoptive mother: "I don't want to leave mummy."

Sifiso Mahlangu finally left Heathrow the following day, watched by a weeping Salome Stopford, aged 50, who had unsuccessfully attempted to adopt him after bringing him to Britain in 1992, ostensibly to further his education.

It emerged that Sifiso had written a note to the Queen, saying: "Dear Her Majesty, I want to stay here with my white mum. Can you please help me because no one else will help me. Everyone seems to be against me and my Mum. I want to stay here with my family. I am happy here."

Sifiso arrived in South Africa on Sunday with his mother, Selina Mahlangu, aged 30, who used to work as Mrs Stopford's maid there.

The "rights" to the Mahlangu family's story have been secured by a South African magazine, Fair Lady, which has helped them with their custody battle in Britain.

The editor of Fair Lady, Roz Wrottesley, said that the magazine's financial support had been limited to a contribution to the costs of flying the Mahlangu parents to Britain for the initial court hearing last year.

She strongly defended the Mahlangu corner in the custody case, dismissing arguments that the boy would have had a better life in Britain as racist and materialist. "They have never, at any time, contemplated adoption. Their desire to



Salome Stopford with one of her daughters (above), and Sifiso (right) back in South Africa

have their son back has been absolutely unflagging."

Even if South Africa offers more opportunities than it did before, Sifiso's home life will not be as comfortable as it has been in London. He visited his parents last year and said: "They live in one room, and I had to sleep in the same bed as my mother and sister, while my father slept on the floor. I had to bathe in a bucket and use an outside toilet."

The case is to be reconsidered by the European courts next week, but Mrs Stopford said she was uncertain what would happen if they ruled against the British courts' decision now Sifiso was in South Africa.



## Alarm at 'privatisation by stealth' for woodlands

Peter Hetherington

**T**HE Forestry Commission, Britain's biggest landowner, is facing "privatisation by stealth" to meet tough new financial targets, countryside groups said last week.

After selling a tenth of its land holding — 310,000 acres — since the early 1980s, the state undertaking is under growing pressure to sell off its most important forests to eventually become profitable. So far, it has raised £208 million for the Treasury from forest sales.

The commission's commercial arm, Forest Enterprise, which owns and manages much of the country's woodland, has been told to adopt rigorous market disciplines under agency status granted last month. Amenity groups fear that walkers could be banned from huge tracts of land. The commission's "freedom to roam" policy is regarded as a model for other landowners.

Guidelines prepared by the commission, telling staff how to judge demand for access before estates are put on the market, have set alarm bells ringing.

While the commission says it will

not sell "sensitive" areas, such as the New Forest, opponents of privatisation believe that the "access check list" leaked to the Ramblers Association has been designed to tilt the balance in favour of accelerated sales.

The commission says that while it does not wish to sell land "intensively used for recreation", some woods of "recreational importance" might still be hived off if that helped to rationalise estates — although most sales would take place only where access could be guaranteed.

Gavin Strang, the shadow agriculture minister, said: "Almost inevitably when an estate is sold, access is restricted or denied." ● The Government is to receive a £2 billion windfall — equivalent to a 1p cut in income tax — from taking over responsibility for British Coal's pension fund.

The fund is heading for a £4 billion surplus which will be split equally between enhanced pensions for miners and white-collar staff, and the Treasury, said the National Audit Office in a report published last week on British Coal's privatisation.

## Haven found for refugee

**A** N ALL-NIGHT telephone and fax marathon by the Labour MP, Bernie Grant, succeeded in persuading Guyana to give refuge to the Nigerian student Ade Onibiyi, who was due to be deported to Nigeria, writes David Pallister.

Mr Onibiyi, aged 20, flew to Guyana in South America, where Mr Grant was born, after the MP for Tottenham contacted the president, Cheddi Jagan.

The frantic efforts to find Mr Onibiyi a haven have coincided with doubts about government claims that Interpol in Nigeria had found his father, Abdul, a pro-democracy dissident, who had apparently disappeared after he was deported last October.

Last month, the Court of Appeal upheld a High Court ruling that the Home Secretary, Michael Howard, had not acted unlawfully in ordering the student's deportation.

Mr Onibiyi has a brother and sister who are British nationals. His mother and two younger sisters are in London but they, too, face the threat of removal.

## Scargill makes his pitch

Michael White and Seumas Milne

**A** RTHUR Scargill has opened a new phase in the guerrilla war which small parties are threatening to wage against the Labour-Conservative hegemony at the coming general election.

When the miners' leader's Socialist Labour Party (SLP) was finally given its formal May Day launch last week, he hinted that he would stand against Alan Howarth at the next election if Labour imposes the Tory deflector from Stratford-on-Avon on a constituency such as the Yorkshire seat of Wentworth. Given the unpopularity of the

Tories under John Major and unease on the left about Tony Blair's leadership, the surprise is that David v. Goliath politics has taken so long to re-emerge after Margaret Thatcher's charismatic grip on British politics was replaced by pragmatic middle.

The prolonged political crisis of the 1970s led to the rise of Scots and Welsh nationalist parties, a surge of Trotskyite activism in and beyond Labour's ranks, and — briefly in the 1974 elections — a boost for the fascist National Front.

Liste was heard from Tory MPs such as Douglas Hurd and Chris Patten about the need for electoral reform and proportional representa-

tion once Mrs Thatcher was firmly in charge. And the greatest break-away of all, the ex-Labour SDP, ended in merger with the Liberals.

But in the 1990s electoral reform talk has returned on both left and right, with disaffected MPs and activists predicting splits and realignments in both major parties after the next election.

Mr Scargill has long been a supporter of PR as a vital element and is anti-European, like Sir James Goldsmith, from whom he does not expect financial support.

Just as the Goldsmith-funded Referendum Party is sizing up prominent Tory MPs such as Kenneth Clarke and David Mellor to take on,

members of Mr Scargill's SLP have already decided to challenge Tony Blair in his Sedgefield constituency and the shadow employment secretary, Michael Meacher, in Oldham West.

Meanwhile, Harrods owner Mohamed al-Fayed may emulate another philanthropic tradition in the grocery trade, that of the Salisbury family, whose good causes have long included discreet help for political think tanks.

Mr al-Fayed is looking for bright young people, "without axes to grind", to run an independent institute to examine options for constitutional reform. He will provide the "seed corn".

Options range from a slimmed-down monarchy and reformed House of Lords to a Bill of Rights and Freedom of Information Act.

Mr Scargill is also an outsider with a grievance. The SLP was being founded, the National Union of Mineworkers president said, because there were now "no fundamental differences between the Conservative party, New Labour and the Liberal Democrats".

The new party, whose candidate, Brenda Nixon, won 5.4 per cent of the vote in the Hensworth by-election in February, has been dismissed by both the Labour leadership and leftwing MPs like Ken Livingstone as irrelevant.

Mr Scargill was flanked at the launch by two London Labour councillors who have defected to Socialist Labour, Pat Sikoraki of the Rail Maritime and Transport union executive, and Imran Khan, solicitor for the family of the racist murder victim, Stephen Lawrence.

## Insurance giant to shed 5,000 jobs

Ian King

**M**ORE than 5,000 jobs are to be axed as two of the best known names in the insurance business merge to create a £6.3 billion giant.

Sun Alliance and Royal Insurance stunned the City last week when they revealed plans to join to create Britain's biggest insurance group, in an attempt to fend off fierce competition from telephone-based newcomers such as Direct Line.

The deal, which will see about 4,000 jobs cut from the Royal's head offices in London and Liverpool, and from Sun Alliance's regional head offices, with another 1,000 coming from foreign operations, was criticised by unions, which warned that thousands more jobs were at risk. Alan Piper, assistant general secretary of the banking and finance union Bifu, said that thousands of staff at both companies now faced months of uncertainty.

Roger Lyons, general secretary of the MSF, said: "There has been no prior consultation. The 22,000 employees first heard of these draconian job losses over breakfast."

Michael Meacher, shadow employment secretary, called for inquiries by both the Office for Fair Trading and the European Commission into the proposed merger.

However, news of the merger, which will save about £175 million by 1998, was welcomed by the City, where shares in both companies soared. Royal shares closed up 87p at 437p, valuing the group at £2.9 billion, while Sun Alliance shares jumped 55p to 414p, valuing it at £3.4 billion.

Announcing details of the merger, Royal's chief executive, Richard Gamble, who becomes group chief executive of the merged business, stressed that most of the 5,000 jobs would go through natural wastage. "Most of the reduction will come from early retirement and a recruitment freeze, but there will be some voluntary redundancies."

● British Telecom's dreams of creating one of the world's biggest telephone companies collapsed last week with the failure of £33 billion merger talks with its erstwhile rival, Cable & Wireless.

Five months of tough negotiations ended after a marathon meeting of the C&W board agreed that the hurdles to a merger were too high.

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## Spies and the ballot box

**S**PY CLAIMS and speculation that the Russian presidential election may be postponed has dramatically revived the dark art of Kremlinology. In both areas it is not so much what is said but how it is said that requires extensive analysis. The case of the alleged British spies has been denied by the Foreign Office. They are absolutely right, of course. Everyone knows that British diplomats keep their eyes open, the American ones gather intelligence, and it is only the Russians who actually spy. In real life it would be amazing if no one in the British embassy in Moscow were working for MI6 (the only question is how many). With the election in a month's time, inside political information gained by snooping of one kind or another will be more than usually prized. Nor should it be forgotten that both Russia and Britain have a vested interest in keeping a close watch on each other as competitive members of the nuclear club. The question remains why the publicity head of the successor to the KGB should have announced Moscow's "stern protest" at the use of the British embassy for "illegal spying activities". Could this be any chance being intended to pick up the patriotic vote for Boris Yeltsin?

Until Mr Yeltsin spoke out on Monday, repudiating the remarks of his security chief General Alexander Korzhakov, there were some doubts as to whether voting would take place at all on June 16. Gen Korzhakov, who had said that bloodshed might follow unless the elections were postponed, is no loose cannon. His views have prevailed on the president over such critical issues as oil export policy and the war in Chechnya. The notion of delaying the election has already been floated by lower-ranking officials, and Russian millionaire bankers and industrialists have also called for "compromise" between Mr Yeltsin and his communist rival, Gennady Zyuganov.

Gen Korzhakov also followed up his first warning with a second statement in an interview with a Russian news agency on Sunday. Was Mr Yeltsin really unaware of his aide's intention? On Monday the president said he had told Gen Korzhakov not to "get involved with politics". It is hardly surprising that some analysts will suspect there is more to the story, especially since Mr Yeltsin says he shares the view that a victory for Mr Zyuganov "would start a civil war". It may suit his purpose to have Gen Korzhakov raise the political temperature and then present himself as insisting on the democratic process — so long as people vote the right way.

Mr Yeltsin is doing slightly better in the polls. Those published at the weekend showed him running neck-and-neck with Mr Zyuganov or slightly ahead. A month ago he was trailing by at least six points. However, Russian commentators warn that voters have managed to disprove the polls already — particularly in the 1993 parliamentary election when the extreme nationalist Vladimir Zhirinovskiy did far better than expected. This time, too, voters may be reluctant to reveal their intention to vote for an outspoken opposition candidate. There are also suspicions that the system of counting the votes, which is dominated by the president's people, may prove shaky. Many Russians believe that there has been falsification before. No one expects Mr Yeltsin to win outright in the first round. The second round — a run-off presumably with Mr Zyuganov — is seen as much more vulnerable. Monday's statement will not quell the speculation: meanwhile the Russian people await more important answers — about jobs, prices and the crisis of production — which Mr Yeltsin cannot deliver.

## Were they just obeying orders?

**T**HIS WEEK Dusko Tadic took his place in history. He is the first person since Nuremberg 50 years ago to stand trial in an international court on charges of crimes against humanity. Tadic, the "butcher of Prijedor", is charged with systematic brutality against Muslim civilians, including murder, rape, and torture. He is among more than 50 individuals indicted by the international criminal tribunal for the former Yugoslavia. Others include Bosnian Croats and Muslims, as well as Radovan Karadzic, the Bosnian Serb leader, and General

Ratko Mladic, his military commander, who are indicted on 16 counts, including genocide.

Before the international community congratulates itself on this initiative, potentially of huge significance, we should consider the legacy of Nuremberg. Lord Shawcross, Britain's chief prosecutor, hailed the Nuremberg trial as a "milestone in the history of civilisation". It established the principle of individual responsibility for state crimes, that it was not enough to say "we were just obeying orders". Yet, as Richard Goldstone, the South African judge and chief prosecutor at the Hague tribunals for both Yugoslavia and Rwanda, has said: "The hope of 'never again' became the reality of again and again." Atrocities indicted as crimes at Nuremberg have gone unpunished, in Algeria, Cambodia, Vietnam, East Timor, Iraq, and elsewhere. The permanent members of the Security Council have supplied arms knowing they would be used, not only in war but also against ethnic minorities. So why did the Security Council agree to act on the former Yugoslavia? The short answer is embarrassment tinged, perhaps, with guilt. Here, in Europe, was ethnic cleansing, photographs of concentration camps reminiscent of the Holocaust, harrowing accounts of massacres, torture, and rape. Public opinion demanded action.

The very title of the Nuremberg trial, of "German Major War Criminals", gave away its limitations. Goldstone describes his strategy as investigating "lower-level persons involved in carrying out the crimes to build cases against the leaders". Time will tell if the tribunal will succeed. Defence lawyers are already arguing that it will hand down "victors' justice", ignoring the "dirty hands" of their prosecutors. In talks at the UN about setting up a permanent international criminal court, the US, Britain and France are insisting that the court must be a creature of the Security Council. To be credible and effective, a permanent court must be self-standing and independent.

## Handguns must be banned now

**A**MIRACULOUS conversion occurred last week. The Unmagnificent Six appeared to be metamorphosing into the Responsible Six. No other group of UK ministers has been so ready to shoot from the hip as the current Home Office gang. Years of patient legislative preparation by predecessors have been torn up, shredded and tossed aside by the Michael Howard band. Yet last week one of the most unconstructed members of the team, David Maclean, who is so ready to resort to knee-jerk reactions he is rarely let out, spoke out against knee-jerk legislation. Guns provide the explanation. Seven weeks on from the killing of 16 children and their teacher at Dunblane, ministers have already begun to fudge on tighter gun control. Doubtless should listen to David Mellor, a former Conservative Home Office minister at the time of the Hungerford shootings, who has rightly warned of time running out on gun law reform.

Mellor was blunt about the 35 options which Home Office (and Scottish Office) ministers submitted to Lord Cullen's inquiry into the Dunblane shootings: "I personally think it was a serious error for the Home Office to queue up in front of Lord Cullen to put to him policy proposals that are really a matter for government to determine." And so say all of us. Or almost all except the Home Office ministers involved. David Maclean defended the delay by insisting "all the main parties have said we must resist knee-jerk legislation".

Of course it is right to set up the Cullen inquiry. Of course it is right for ministers to submit evidence. But if ministers were serious about tighter controls, they would have acted this session. Gun control is one issue where ministers do need to move with the tide. Although the British gun lobby is not as formidable as its American cousin, it remains a powerful body. This is why so many gaps remain in current UK controls. Take the biggest one of all in 1988, as a response to the Hungerford shootings, semi-automatic rifles were prohibited but handguns, most of which are semi-automatic, were not. Yet handguns were also used by Michael Ryan at Hungerford — and Thomas Hamilton in Dunblane — to commit their grisly mass murders. In at least one respect handguns are even more dangerous than rifles — the ease with which they can be concealed. Just like a rifle, they are capable of rapidly firing many rounds without reloading. We should not need to wait for Cullen. They should be banned forthwith.

## South African dream still lies in the balance

Martin Woollacott

**W**HEN historians reassess the South African revolution, they may well decide that the old regime gave up less because of pressure from its enemies, or because it belatedly realised its own wrongdoing, than because the inexorable forces of population growth and urbanisation were beyond its capacity to control.

The twisted form that modernisation took in South Africa turned impulses experienced by all societies, the mechanisation of agriculture and the movement to the cities, into the engines of truly menacing social changes. The National Party handed over power at precisely the moment when power had become a burden that was too much to bear.

Problems now stand at the centre of affairs, displacing the negotiation with old enemies and the creation of a new framework for government that has until now occupied so much time and taken so much energy. There may be some continued wrangling over the constitution, and there will be a multi-party government of national unity for a while longer. But the African National Congress will soon squarely face their legacy of vast social dysfunction, grotesque under-education, and armed anger.

White South Africans are now relieved, as a group, of both guilt and responsibility for those problems. In an ironic transformation, those who made the mess can now criticise those who have to try to clean it up. The anxieties and fears of whites, and of all middle-class South Africans of other colours, centre around the autocracy that people now sense in Nelson Mandela and around the enigmatic Thabo Mbeki, his likely successor.

In spite of the miracle of the negotiated revolution, signs of insecurity are everywhere in South Africa, from the barbed wire that decorates the suburbs to the falling rand. The desperate scale of the problems that face the country seem to demand a super-effective government.

Thus, every hint of corruption or incompetence can become, magnified, a harbinger of the banana republic that is the nightmare of white and black. But, in trying to measure these doubts and worries, it is worth remembering that insecurity has been a constant in South African politics from the beginning.

The attempt to create stability out of unpromising materials is the central strand of the country's history. For all the differences between previous regimes and the country's first multi-racial and democratic government, there are unexpectedly close parallels with the past.

Constitution making in 1910, when South Africa was created, and constitution making in 1996, when it is being recreated, revolve around similar themes and similar dangers. Racial reconciliation, centralisation of power, the question of labour, including immigrant labour, and the achievement of a social and economic stability satisfactory to that perennial arbiter of South African history, the "outside investor", were elements then as they are now.

There are also great differences. Above all, racial reconciliation in 1910 was narrowly between Boer and Briton, and at the expense of

blacks. Labour, then, was scarce, whereas now there is an embarrassment of it, yet the question of labour at a "proper price" is as central today as it was 90 years ago.

The broad danger, too, is the same: that the price for stability which appeases local elites and satisfies the foreign investor is the exclusion of some large part of the population. Then, it was all blacks. Today, it would be a more complex, graded, exclusion of some sections of the black population. To say that this is a danger of which anybody in South Africa is unaware would be nonsense. It is the danger of which they are most aware.

But being aware does not mean that it is easily avoided. Again, what links 1910 and 1996 is South Africa's curious combination of wealth and vulnerability. It is a semi-arid country which can be made to grow food and fibre in prosperous quantities but whose agriculture is always on the edge of viability. It has minerals, notably gold, but always, somehow, more difficult to extract than those in other mineral-rich countries. It can support a substantial manufacturing industry but one that has usually been of mediocre quality. It has exhibited a constant dependence on outside investment, and could become the prey of international capitalism.

The fragility of South African wealth is a weapon in the hands of those who want to defend the status quo, to keep wages low or drive them lower, to preserve patterns of land ownership, and to keep affirmative action in industry, government, and academic life to a minimum. But it is also true that the wrong policies on the land or in industry could damage the country's productive base, and its educational and professional standards are equally at risk.

**T**HE NEED to steer a truly skilled course between these rocks is what makes the competence of ANC government so critical. Mr Mandela is a great man, one whose work is almost done. Mr Mbeki is a shadowy figure, outlines sketched by rumour and anecdote. Business likes him, liberals are uncertain. He is consolidating his position, and there have been casualties, including his rival for the succession Cyril Ramaphosa, and a particularly able minister, Pallo Jordan. There are signals that debate and participation within the ANC are not what they used to be.

Yet the future of South Africa will be best served by continued argument, in and out of government, that is conscious of South Africa's needs and fragilities. The country's history displays a strand of racial co-operation and common culture, mingling oppression with intimacy, in response to the difficulties of making a livelihood in the sub-continent.

This imperfect cross-racial tradition was underlined by agricultural modernisation and by the National Party's terrible ideological adventure, which abandoned what remained of human solidarity in a harsh country in favour of a brutal seizure of the majority's assets. The fragilities of South Africa can drive division or unity, depending on how they are approached. In spite of all the changes, that remains the message of its history.

## Paris insists on a role in Lebanon deal

COMMENT

**F**RANCE'S persistence eventually allowed it to play its part in the solution to the crisis in Lebanon. Along with Washington, Beirut and Damascus, Paris will form part of the international group "charged with monitoring the ceasefire that came into force on April 27 is respected. That alone should be a matter of satisfaction.

Septica will argue that it was the United States that played the decisive role in the settlement and will be chiefly responsible for its execution. And it was Washington that Lebanon and Israel pledged to respect the new rules of the military game as defined by the agreement.

That deal more or less provides for a return to the status quo in force before the inglorious, as well as lethal and destructive, operation carried out by Israeli forces in Lebanon.

The US was careful not to make any promises about chipping in to help rebuild the civilian infrastructure destroyed by Israeli bombardment. As has happened before in the Middle East, it is the Europeans who are going to have to dip into their pockets.

In this respect, the French intervention in the conflict, initially greeted with enormous scepticism, was significant. The Europeans have long resented the way the US tends to monopolise the role of mediator in the Middle East peace process and restricts their contribution to that of peacetime bankrollers with no say in the course of events.

Although expected to pay up, the European Union (EU) had to be content with sitting in as an observer at the negotiating table. Thanks to the French intervention, the EU has now managed to reinforce its role in the region.

There is every justification for this, not only in the case of France — a country whose ties with Lebanon go back a long way



Mourners in Lebanon at a funeral in Qana last week for many of the 102 victims of an Israeli attack on a UN compound. PHOTO: AL-MACHANEH

— but as regards Europe as a whole, which extends over so much of the Mediterranean coastline.

All this has not been much to the liking of the US. Washington only reluctantly agreed to allow Paris to play the role it did. Right to the end, the US secretary of state, Warren Christopher, did his best to elbow his French opposite number, Hervé de Charette, out of the bargaining process.

President Jacques Chirac stuck to his guns, apparently determined to give substance to his ambitions in the Arab and Mediterranean arena — ambitions he outlined during his visit to Lebanon and Egypt in April.

But there were limits to the role France could play. Because it did no more than act generally

in favour of a settlement, rather than work specifically as a mediator, France would not have been in the monitoring group had not Syria and Lebanon insisted that it should.

Israel, which trusts neither France nor Europe, did not want the French involved. That is why the EU finds the Middle East situation such hard going. If you want to act as a mediator, earn a place at the negotiating table and promote the peace process on an equal footing with the US, you need to be approached by both warring parties and to be in a position to lean on both of them.

Despite the positive role played by Paris in this latest tragic chapter of Lebanese history, that is not true of either France or the EU.

(April 28/29)

## Khartoum struggles to keep southern city

Jean Hôléne in Juba

**E**VERY morning the drone of the first cargo aircraft wakes up the inhabitants of Juba, the largest city in southern Sudan. The city's lifeline to the capital, Khartoum, 1,300km away has been the airlift put in place when the second rebellion in the south began 13 years ago.

Juba, half of whose 180,000 inhabitants are refugees, is very different from the bustling, overcrowded Arab cities of the north. It looks like a typical sprawling African city, consisting mainly of mud and straw huts with a sprinkling of administrative buildings, churches, mosques and aid agency encampments.

There are barracks everywhere — it is thought 50 per cent of the population is made up of soldiers.

Juba is isolated in the middle of bush controlled by the Sudan People's Liberation Army (SPLA). It depends for its survival on its international airport, almost as busy as Khartoum's, and on the White Nile, piled by the occasional heavily protected convoy of boats.

Paulino Laku Kedisa, assistant governor of Bahr al-Jebel state, claims the province has been virtually liberated, though he admits that guerrilla forces have cut off roads to the north and to all neighbouring countries except Zaire.

Even though the SPLA is not right at the city gates, Juba is under siege. Its inhabitants, fear being bombarded by rebel forces, which have succeeded in getting close enough to shell the town on four occasions since 1988.

The situation has been particularly precarious since the SPLA's major offensive in early November, which caused panic in Khartoum. The government thought it vital to hang on to a city it sees as symbolising Sudanese unity. So it pulled out all the stops to keep control of Juba: an airlift of nine daily flights over a five-week period made it possible to bring in enough troops, food and equipment to check a rebel advance along the Kit river, 60km south of the city.

But the fall of Pochala, on the Ethiopian border, in March revealed the existence of a new alliance between the SPLA and Ethiopia. This could prove dangerous even if, for the time being, regular troops control the environs of Juba as far as Yel, which lies

## Church regrets its role in 'dirty war'

Christine Legrand in Buenos Aires and Henri Tincq

**I**N A document published on April 27 in Buenos Aires, the Argentine Catholic Church asked "forgiveness for the misdeeds that could be attributed to it". The Church fathers admitted that they had not been active enough in preventing the repression by the military regime during the "dirty war" in the 1970s, which resulted in thousands of people being killed or "disappeared". Human rights organisations put the number of victims who died or disappeared during the seven years of military terror at 30,000.

This belated admission of guilt comes a few months after the mothers of a number of the "disappeared" wrote to the Pope asking him to get the Argentine Church to make its position clear. A first step was taken in December, when the bishops made the following confession: "We did not succeed in measuring the gravity of the malady that was attacking the fabric of society. We erred out of a lack of realism."

That inadequate declaration was publicly criticised. The April 27 statement is clearer. The episcopate repents and "humbly" asks to be forgiven for the mistakes it made during the 1970s. It accepts that "Catholics justified systematic violence", and highlights the participation of "many sons of the Church" in "immoral and atrocious" acts of repression against guerrillas, acts "which shame us all".

Argentines have been waiting for this kind of document for 20 years. But it does not accept any direct responsibility on the part of the Church as an institution, stressing instead the fact that priests and Catholic activists were active in guerrilla movements as well as in the security forces.

The silence, not to say connivance, of the Argentine episcopate during the military dictatorship remains a mystery, particularly when it is compared with the response of the Chilean and Brazilian bishops, who were much more willing to attack their military regimes.

Argentine bishops were such

zealous supporters of the regime that they even censored the celebrated prayer in the magnificent, which goes: "He hath put down the mighty from their seat, and hath exalted the humble and meek."

Their attitude was all the more surprising because Argentina was one of the Latin American countries, along with El Salvador, where the Church was hardest hit by civil war. One of its bishops, Mgr Angelici, died in a mysterious car accident in 1976. Eleven priests and two nuns were murdered by security forces. And dozens of priests, seminarians, monks and lay preachers were imprisoned and tortured, or simply "disappeared".

Yet the Argentine episcopate, which is deeply divided in its attitude to that period, has not said a single word about that grisly record. Only a tiny minority of liberal-minded bishops, led by Mgr Miguel Hesayne, Archbishop of Victoria, has made any public attempt at face-saving. When the Pope visited Victoria in 1987, Mgr Hesayne made critical remarks about the Church, "which has not identified with the poor or the persecuted".

It took almost 10 more years for the Church in Argentina to come around to making a collective confession of guilt.

"This document makes a contribution to the pacification of Argentine society," said Senator Eduardo Vaca of the ruling Justicialista Party. "Its attitude should be initiated by all sections of society."

Members of human rights organisations, however, feel that the Church "has minimised its responsibilities". They reject the bishops' attempt to put guerrilla warfare and state terrorism on the same level by referring to the responsibility of "sons of the Church" in both camps.

The Nobel Peace Prize winner, Adolfo Pérez Esquivel, said: "It's the theory of the two devils. The Church does not accept that there were victims of the military crackdown who had no connections at all with either camp." He regards the document as "totally watered-down" and says it is full of "evasive and uncourageous language".

(May 2)

150km southwest of the city on the road to Zaire.

"You don't need an escort to drive there," says an aid worker. "But make sure you're not the first person to take that road in the morning. Just in case rebels have laid mines during the night."

The ubiquitous security services keep a very close eye on all expatriates and visitors, and local inhabitants are nervous of being seen talking to foreigners. Few people are allowed outside Juba's perimeter, to prevent information being passed to the rebels.

In June 1992 the SPLA came close to taking Juba, after infiltrating it with a "fifth column". The ruthless crackdown that ensued is still fresh in everyone's mind. The so-called White House, where interrogations took place, is remembered with horror.

Although fertile, the surrounding countryside has been deserted as a result of the war, and Juba would survive for only three months at most on local farm output. In an attempt to reduce this costly reliance on food from outside, local government officials are granted two "farming days" a week so that they can work the land.

Sudan's Muslim leaders are still trying to divide the Christian and animist African tribes. They have been exploiting the hostility felt by the Bari and the Madi, the main local tribes in Juba, towards the Dinka (the largest ethnic group in southern Sudan and in the rebel army), who dominated them during the south's period of semi-autonomy from 1972 to 1983.

But neither that ploy nor the SPLA's divisions have given a decisive advantage to the Islamist regime in Khartoum.

(May 2)

# Changing times leave Japan's pensioners out in the cold

Philippe Pons in Tokyo

THE couple were found dead in their car, huddled together in Shin Kiba, near an industrial zone east of Tokyo. Aged about 60, they had died of cold and undernourishment. The woman had apparently outlived her partner by a week.

They had been living in the car for four years. After being evicted from their flat because they could no longer afford the rent, they had packed what remained of their belongings into the car, an old model that suggested they must once have had a more affluent lifestyle, and set off to begin a new life as "travelers" in the big city.

When the man could no longer find odd jobs, the petrol ran out and the car came to a halt. An employee of a supermarket near where the car was parked, its tyres flat and windows covered with newspaper, remembers that two weeks before the bodies were found the woman had asked for some water. Neighbours said she had been a piano teacher. The

couple's only possessions were a gas ring but no gas, some blankets and a few coins.

The proportion of elderly among the homeless in affluent Japan highlights the shortcomings of a system that is supposed to care for those who are no longer productive.

Anyone wishing to benefit from the state pension scheme must have contributed for at least 25 years. After 40 years' contributions, he or she is entitled to \$680 a month. Those who have failed to contribute, or have not contributed enough, can apply for support to local authorities. But they must prove they are destitute and have no family. Many prefer to exclude themselves from society, and end up living under canvas in parks or in cardboard boxes in cellars or subways.

When France was brought to a standstill in December 1995 by strikers determined to hang on to their entitlements, there was a widespread feeling in Japan that France must be a very rich country if it could afford to do that kind of thing.



Home alone... The plight of the elderly homeless highlights the shortcomings of the system in Japan

Filial devotion used to be the keystone of a Japanese system of values bequeathed by Confucianism, but it has not survived urbanisation and the loosening of family ties: today, 85 per cent

of Japanese die in hospitals or old people's homes.

Japan's population is ageing so fast that the government will be forced to reconsider its concept of the minimal state. The

health ministry is looking into a system of home care for the old, expected to number 28 million by 1999. The scheme will serve as an example to the rest of Asia. (April 26)

# Cambodia's Chinese start to smile again

Jean-Claude Pomont in Phnom Penh reports on the economic clout of an ethnic minority

LU is a happy old man. Every morning, he crosses the boulevard to get a better look at his newly built four-storey hotel. In a few months' time, when the interior decoration is finished, his children will organise a lavish inauguration.

For the next two or three years Lu will not find it easy to fill his hotel. Since UN observers pulled out at the end of 1993, Phnom Penh's hotels have suffered from excess capacity. Room prices have gone through the floor, and several hotels have had to close.

But Lu is not too worried. With the security situation greatly improved, tourists are beginning to creep back. His 30-room hotel is well located in the centre of the Khmer capital, and has a good selection of dance halls, massage parlours and bars within walking distance. His children's future is assured.

Lu, who is a member of Cambodia's ethnic Chinese community, is lucky to be alive. He had a small grocery store before Cambodia was ravaged by war. When the Khmer Rouge emptied Phnom Penh of its population in 1975, he was separated from his family. Tens of thousands of ethnic Chinese died, and as many again sought refuge in neighbouring Vietnam.

Lu, who was sent to a forest-clearing camp on the Thai border, somehow managed to survive. When the Vietnamese army occupied Cambodia in 1979, overrunning the Khmer Rouge, he spent six months trying in vain to trace his family. Then came what he describes as "the happiest day of my life" when he arrived in the town of Kompong Thom. There, in the home of one of the few Chinese living there, he was reunited with his three sons and one of his daughters.

His wife and other daughter had died of malnutrition and disease.

Lu returned with his four children to Phnom Penh, where he met a nephew who had occupied a two-storey building and an adjoining patch of waste land in the centre. Lu took over the city land and set up a stall selling bowls of Chinese soup. He saved enough to build a wooden shack, which in time turned into a café. Eventually, with the help of other members of the Chinese community, he was able to borrow enough money to go into business with his nephew. Together they built the hotel.

In accordance with a widespread Chinese custom, Lu remarried as he was approaching 70, this time to a woman 20 years his junior who could look after him in his old age.

In 1994 he revisited Canton, the Chinese city from which his parents had emigrated when he was four, and located some distant cousins.

As Chinese schools were allowed to reopen in Cambodia in 1990, his grandchildren's education will not be a problem. Chinese community life has come back into its own.

Before the country was engulfed by hostilities in 1970, there were about 500,000 ethnic Chinese in Cambodia, 200,000 of them in Phnom Penh. Most came originally from Guangdong province. The government puts their present number at 300,000, with 80 per cent concentrated in the capital because several provinces remain unsafe.

To finance their projects they rely on help from wealthy overseas Chinese in Singapore, Kuala Lumpur, Bangkok and Hong Kong. They control the gold trade in the capital's central market. Chinese stalls are prominent in other smaller markets in Phnom Penh and provincial towns. Their signs, usually red and gold, are increasingly often written in Chinese characters.

Teng Boo Ma, president of Cambodia's new chamber of commerce and reportedly the wealthiest man in the country, is of Chinese origin.

Of the 24 people who sit on the chamber's management board, 17 speak Chinese. The Association of Cambodian Chinese, reconstituted in 1990, has already opened 13 schools and restored five temples in Phnom Penh.

The Chinese are the biggest donors of funds to public projects. They contributed \$400,000 towards the financing of a new boulevard overlooking the Mekong river in Phnom Penh — and named after Hun Sen, joint prime minister, who opened it in January. The state is strapped for cash and often calls on private capital to help finance public utilities, a practice also common in Thailand. In the two kingdoms, as in other countries in the region, politics and business make good bedfellows.

OVERSEAS Chinese, who act as economic pacemakers throughout southeast Asia, are leading foreign investors in Cambodia, which gets most of its aid from Western countries and Japan. When Cambodia joins the Association of South East Asian Nations, probably in 1997, that trend will probably gather momentum.

Overseas Chinese obtained several generous forestry concessions from the government last year — triggering a controversy in the process, when King Norodom Sihanouk said in February that deforestation constituted as great a threat to the country's survival as warfare.

The Chinese act as a useful channel for foreign capital because, after 25 years of war and massacres, Cambodia's business regulations remain ill-defined. It is therefore vital to have good contacts. In that respect the Chinese have a decisive advantage: they know the lie of the land and its politicians.

Foreign companies are moving into Cambodia fast. The Taiwanese group Tatung has decided on an initial investment of \$26 million in an office equipment factory. Other Taiwanese firms have obtained licences to broadcast television programmes

on six channels. The Thais and Singaporeans dominate the hotel sector. Malaysian Helicopter Systems has sunk \$10 million into the re-launch of Royal Air Cambodia.

There would not be such interest in Cambodia had not the local Chinese community got its act together at the beginning of the nineties. Lu was not the only person to have made it thanks to the mutual aid networks based on trust that have re-formed in the past few years as a result of an improved business environment. Local authorities often turn for help to the Chinese, who arouse little resentment among Cambodians, whereas the tens of thousands of poor Vietnamese immigrant workers are generally unpopular.

Lu is not just content with saving money for his children, grandchildren and grandnephews. Worthy patriarch that he is, he likes to spend Sunday afternoons with his family a few kilometres north of Phnom Penh, in one of the 300 open-air restaurants which have mushroomed on the west bank of the Mekong, and which offer delicious dishes of game, fish and shellfish. The spot is a favourite meeting place of the capital's new bourgeoisie. It is there that local Chinese like to take their business partners from Bangkok or Singapore.

Dragon Air flights from Hong Kong to Phnom Penh are often packed with punters, who make for the capital's numerous authorised and clandestine gambling dens. Other services are provided by the city's more than 10,000 prostitutes, many of them children. Three golf courses backed by foreign capital, are due to open this year.

When the country was short of foreign capital, the royal government toyed with the idea of building a new town, provisionally called China-Cambodia City, on a huge site just south of Phnom Penh, with the aim of taking in up to 200,000 overseas Chinese, in particular those who decide to leave Hong Kong in 1997.

Although the project was shelved in 1994, it made it easier for parliament to pass a law on immigration, apparently tailor-made for Chinese investors, which specified that "aliens who have received an authorisation to invest, as well as members of their immediate family, are entitled to reside permanently in the kingdom of Cambodia".

The future looks rosy for the Chinese community. To be sure, the bribes they need to pay to get an authorisation or local police protection have increased in the past year. But the Chinese are old hands at such practices.

Thanks to local and overseas Chinese, Cambodia has slowly but surely been caught up in the momentum of its neighbours. The last rural fighting against the Khmer Rouge is confined to the area near the Thai border. In the longer term, Cambodia is destined to become a country of tourism and transit between the two great cities of Bangkok and Ho Chi Minh City.

There are those who are taking advantage of Cambodia's still embryonic administration to deal in drugs; others have organised networks to help people in mainland China leave their country — many young refugees moulder in cheap Phnom Penh hotels waiting to get the passport that may enable them to join a relative somewhere else in the world.

Lu is right to feel confident about the future. The economic clout of local Chinese and the support they can muster from abroad are now such that any reversal of their fortunes seems unlikely. Lu would like to go on one last trip to Canton, home of his ancestors. His three sons and his nephew are, after all, old enough now to keep the family concern on a profitable course. (April 24)

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# The Washington Post

## U.N. Says Israel Took Aim at Qana Camp

John M. Goshko

THE ISRAELI artillery shelling that killed about 100 civilian refugees at a U.N. base in southern Lebanon last month was triggered when Lebanese Hezbollah guerrillas fired rockets into Israel from two nearby locations and then took refuge inside the base, according to a U.N. investigation of the incident.

Whether Israel retaliated by deliberately firing at the base is still being debated by senior U.N. officials, according to sources familiar with the inquiry. Some said the evidence points to a conclusion that the Israelis acted deliberately, but others said more information is needed before a judgment can be made.

The sources were referring to the findings of a still secret and incomplete probe conducted by Dutch Brigadier General Frank Van Kappen, a military adviser to Secretary General Boutros Boutros-Ghali. The sources, citing the sensitive nature of the situation, all refused to be identified more closely. Some have seen all or part of Van Kappen's draft, and some acknowledged that their information was second hand.

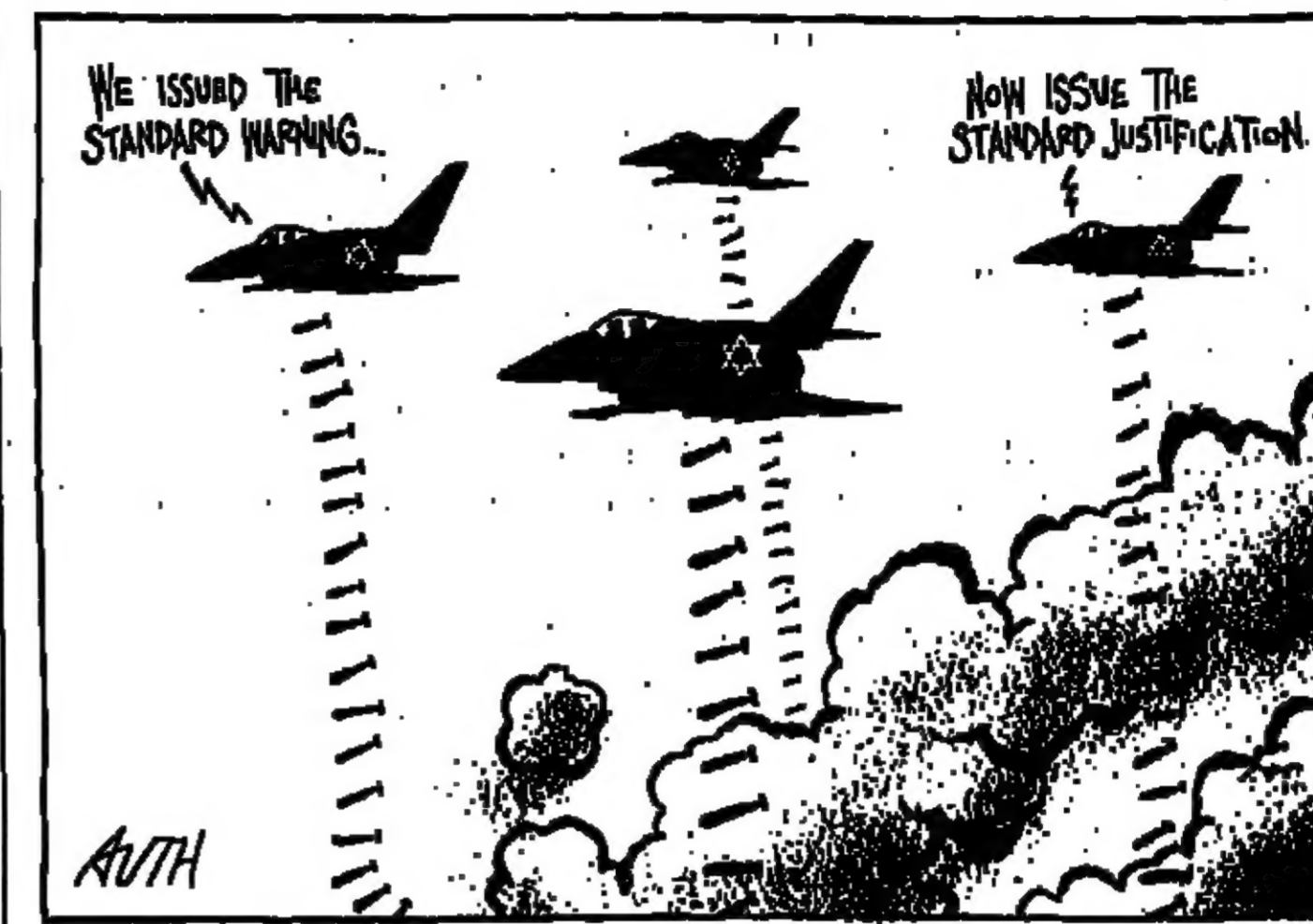
Immediately after the artillery blitz on April 18, there were reports that guerrillas from Hezbollah, a militant Shiite Muslim militia, had fired Katyusha rockets across the Israeli border from at least one location near the U.N. base at Qana. However, there previously had been no information that at least some of the guerrillas fled into the camp and were there when the Israelis launched their bombardment.

Israeli military officers knew the U.N. camp was filled with civilian refugees, and the death toll drew world-wide criticism. It also led President Clinton to send Secretary of State Warren Christopher to broker a cease-fire.

Israel steadfastly has denied that it intentionally attacked the camp. It said it was retaliating against the site nearby from which Hezbollah had fired the rockets, and a top Israeli general said on the day of the assault that his gunners had overshoot their mark. But some of the sources here said that the initial draft of Van Kappen's report cited the available evidence as pointing to an informed judgment that Israel knew it was firing at the camp.

However, other sources, including at least one who has seen Van Kappen's draft, said the question of Israel's intent was still open, with one comparing it to "the missing piece in a jigsaw puzzle." These sources said that in hopes of answering that question more definitively, senior U.N. officials have asked the Israeli government for more detailed information and are awaiting a reply.

Some diplomats at the United Nations have suggested that the United States, which had backed Israel's air, ground and sea incursions into Lebanon as legitimate self-defense, might be exerting pressure to ensure that the report does not blame Israel for deliberately targeting the base. U.S. officials said they would have no comment at this time, but diplomats friendly to the Jewish state emphasized that Van Kappen's investigation had established conclusively



that Hezbollah guerrillas were in the camp at the time it was attacked.

According to the various sources, Van Kappen's investigation determined that guerrillas opposing Israel's continued occupation of a "security zone" strip of land in southern Lebanon had been moving in and out of the U.N. camp manned by Fijian peacekeeping troops since the Israeli offensive against Hezbollah began on April 1. Some of the guerrillas even had their families living among the refugees who had flocked to the camp in hopes that the U.N. flag would protect them from Israeli shelling.

The sources said the guerrillas, working in small groups of two or three, established a pattern of coming out of the camp to lob mortar-launched rockets into Israel and then fleeing back inside. The Fijian troops were unable to force them out, and in one clash the week be-

fore the Israeli shelling, a U.N. soldier was shot in the chest.

The Israelis were aware that guerrillas were using the camp, the sources said, but avoided firing on it prior to the April 18 bombardment. On that date, the sources said, guerrillas launched rockets into Israel from locations 500 meters and 200 meters from the camp, after which at least two or three ran inside. An Israeli reconnaissance drone flying over the area relayed information back on the sites from which the rockets were fired, and Israeli gunners then launched the bombardment that leveled the U.N. camp.

The United Nations has asked Israel to give it the information collected by the reconnaissance drone and to explain how it was used in the subsequent Israeli targeting decisions. The sources said there was no indication yet of whether Israel will comply.

## U.S. Setting Bad Example To the World

EDITORIAL

THE United Nations has technically run out of money. The cause: Member countries that haven't anted up their dues. The biggest debtor by far: the United States.

The United Nations won't have to lock its doors and sell the office furniture, because it can dip into its separate peacekeeping budget to stay afloat. But that kind of forced budgetary gimmickery isn't without cost. Countries that have provided troops for peacekeeping missions in the past are less likely to do so in the future if they're not confident of getting reimbursed. As a result, the criteria for U.N. involvement get stiffer and stiffer. It's possible, for example, that a relatively small U.N. commitment to peacekeeping in Liberia could have prevented the recent descent into chaos there, with the attendant misery for Liberians, danger for Americans and costs to the U.S. military. But when the time was ripe, the United Nations wasn't prepared to take on another job.

This isn't all bad, as Republicans in Congress have pointed out. In the first part of this decade, U.N. peacekeeping commitments ballooned, with the number of blue-helmeted troops skyrocketing from 10,000 to 80,000. Today there are 30,000. The U.N. bureaucracy, while shrinking, still has fat to trim.

But the proper response isn't to withhold money that the United States unquestionably owes. Congress this year appropriated almost enough to meet current-year obligations, but accumulated debt still tops \$1 billion — more than what will likely be owed, at year's end, by all other U.N. members combined. This reflects not only concern about bureaucratic bloat but general Republican hostility toward the United Nations.

Such an attitude is exceedingly shortsighted. The portrayal of the United Nations as an instrument of U.S. foreign policy is truer today than it has been in a long time. Almost every costly U.N. mission — in Bosnia, Iraq, the Middle East, Angola and elsewhere — is advancing U.S. goals. In Haiti, the United Nations authorized what amounted to a friendly U.S. invasion, then provided cover for a U.S. troop withdrawal. It makes no sense for the United States to break the rules and reduce its leverage.

U.N. Ambassador Madeleine Albright last week asked Congress to authorize payment of the U.S. debt over a five-year period in return for closer consultation on future peacekeeping missions and continuing U.N. reform. It's a reasonable proposal, and Congress should agree. At the moment, the United States isn't setting much of an example.

## Serbs Stir Hatred of Muslim Neighbors

John Pomfret in Kapetan

THE FACT that Zijad Kapetanovic has a hard head might have saved his life last week. Kapetanovic, his 17-year-old daughter and his wife, all Muslims, were attempting to visit their homes for the first time in four years when they were caught in an ambush set by armed Serbs — the same men who rousted them from their quaint hillside farming village in 1992. One man carrying a 4-foot plank slipped up behind Kapetanovic and whacked him in the back of the head.

"You, too, have come back," Kapetanovic remembered the Serb's telling him before he was sent sprawling.

Kapetanovic was one of the luckier ones. The Serb attack left two Muslims dead. While a statement by officials of the NATO peacekeeping force in Bosnia said the Muslims probably died after fleeing into a minefield, NATO officers and witnesses said Serb gunfire was actually to blame.

The Serb ambush of the group of unarmed Muslims in the rolling hills of northwestern Bosnia was the most serious clash between Bosnia's warring parties since a peace pact was negotiated in Dayton, Ohio, in November and signed in Paris the following month. It follows a pattern of assaults, demonstrations and intimidation that have marked the latest phase of the implementation of the peace deal.

Western officials say the problem is that Serbs do not want Muslims to return home, although the Dayton accord clearly gives them that right. The Serbs forced 1 million Muslims from their homes throughout northern and eastern Bosnia under a policy that came to be known as "ethnic cleansing." Bosnian Serb nationalist leaders worry that allowing even some of those people to return would undercut everything they fought for: an ethnically pure state and an ideology of separatism and nationalism.

"This is going to be the next challenge of the Dayton accord: Will people be allowed to return home?" said Margriet Prins, an official with the U.N. High Commissioner for Refugees in the northeast Bosnian city of Tuzla.

The struggle for Kapetan exemplifies a contest all around Bosnia for the future of this country. If people can go home, then Bosnia has some hope of patching together some semblance of its historical multiethnic society in which people lived in peace and, despite their prejudices, sought to express their differences through means other than mass rape and executions, imprisonment and ambushes.

If those who fled cannot go home, then Bosnia risks partition: into three ethnically homogeneous mini-states — Muslim, Croat, and Serb.

Prins said the trickle is expected to turn into a flood in July, after Europe's school year ends. Then, thousands of Bosnian families could pack up their children and come home. European countries are also threatening to revoke the refugee status of many of these people, which would force them back anyway.

Kapetanovic joined about 400 other Muslims on Monday last week on an organized return to the Muslim state, which they surround. And the Muslims state, desperate for support, would be an easy target for radical Islamic elements from the Middle East seeking a base in Europe.

The regional balance of power has little to do, however, with Kapetanovic's desire to go home. His problems, while more prosaic, are just as pressing.

Kapetanovic, 42, a construction worker, has lived with his family in a two-room shack in a village less than a mile from Kapetan since Serbs chased his family from their house four years ago. His landlord is dropping hints that the sooner he and the rest of his family leave, the better.

The reason is that other refugees are slowly returning to Bosnia and space around Kapetanovic's adopted village of Lukavica is getting tight. People have started trickling back from Germany, Sweden and other European countries that took them in when war erupted in Bosnia in 1992.

Under a deal worked out in meetings with Swedish NATO officers, Bosnian Serb police had pledged they would escort the Muslims into the town, let them visit a graveyard there and escort them out.

But the Serb police never showed up, and, after waiting for four hours at a NATO checkpoint, about 50 Muslims decided to walk home.

At first the journey was trouble-free. Kapetanovic, his wife, Mrsada, and daughter Elvira found their house; only a roof and a frame remained of the two-story structure. Everything else — windows, floors, furniture — had been carted away by looting Serbs.

When the group neared the cemetery, shots rang out. Serb thugs had positioned themselves in a meadow on both sides of the road. One Serb tossed a hand grenade at the Muslim group. Several of the Serbs then charged the crowd, wielding truncheons and clubs. In the panic, one Muslim woman ran into a minefield and lost her leg in an explosion.

Two Muslim men were killed immediately, shot in the chest at point-blank range. At least 10 other Muslims were wounded.

Swedish NATO troops who were supposed to ensure that fighting did not flare up in this area, which is part of the 2.5-mile zone of separation running along Bosnia's old factional battle lines, apparently failed to disarm the Serbs.

Under the Dayton agreement, no weapons are allowed in this area. The Muslims were unarmed.



# Clinton Sets Teen Welfare Standards

Barbara Vobejda

**P**RESIDENT Clinton announced last weekend a series of executive actions to force states to end welfare benefits to teenage parents who refuse to finish school or live with a responsible adult.

The directive was aimed at correcting what is considered one of the most glaring weaknesses in the nation's welfare system, payment of benefits to young, unmarried mothers who often move out of their homes and their education and fall into long-term dependency on welfare.

"We have to make it clear that a baby doesn't give you a right and won't give you the money to leave home and drop out of school," Clinton said in his weekly radio address.

While about half the states have provisions aimed at keeping teenage parents on welfare in school and at home, the president's action eventually will result in a national ban on payments to those who refuse.

In an election year when welfare is likely to figure prominently, last Saturday's announcement allows Clinton the upper hand, if temporarily, to claim that he has made progress on the issue while the Republican Congress remains stalled on new legislation to overhaul the welfare system. The Clinton administration has granted "waivers" allowing a majority of states leeway from federal rules to experiment in their welfare programs.

Republicans are divided about whether to send the president new legislation. However, they repeated their claim that Clinton has stood in the way of welfare reform by vetoing legislation passed by Congress last year.

"Bill Clinton and the liberals in Washington are still missing the point: real welfare reform is long overdue," said Michigan Governor John Engler, in a statement released by the Republican Governors Association, which he chairs. "We can't reform welfare and break the cycle of poverty one waiver at a time."

Clinton said he vetoed the welfare bill because it went too far in cutting spending for the poor and making huge changes in foster care, aid for disabled children and the food stamp and school lunch programs. He also said it did too little to help move people from welfare into the work force.

Clinton said that if Congress sends him a "clean welfare reform plan, that demands work, demands responsibility, protects children and helps families stay together, I will sign it. Until then, I'll keep working to do everything in my power to reform welfare step by step and state by state."

Compared to four years ago, the president said, welfare and food stamp rolls are down, teenage pregnancy rates have declined and more welfare recipients are working. Much of that has happened, he said, because his administration has granted 37 states "waivers" allowing flexibility in administering Aid to

Families with Dependent Children (AFDC), the basic cash welfare program.

While a major redesign of the welfare system along the lines proposed by Clinton in 1994 or the Republican plan last year would require a change in federal law, the president can order some changes administratively, such as those he made last week. Last summer, for example, he announced that states proposing certain changes in their welfare programs, such as work requirements or beefed up child support enforcement, would essentially

**'The only way for teen mothers to escape the welfare trap is to live at home and stay in school'**

be given automatic approval by the federal government.

Welfare reform efforts proposed by Republicans and Democrats have focused heavily on teenage parents, in part because they are the group most likely to become long-term welfare recipients. Half of all adults on AFDC, about 2 million people, had their first children when they were teenagers. And only about half of adults on welfare have high school degrees. There are no firm numbers about how many unmarried teenagers are on

welfare. About half a million babies are born each year to teenagers, most of whom are unmarried.

Under the new plan, the first of four steps would require all states to keep teenage mothers in school, denying benefits to those who drop out and do not take steps to complete their high school educations.

"The only way for teen mothers to escape the welfare trap is to live at home, stay in school and get the education they need to get a good job," Clinton said in his address. "We must make sure the welfare system demands that teen mothers follow the responsible path to independence."

A study released last week by the Manpower Demonstration Research Corporation found that the Ohio program, known as LEAP — Learning, Earning and Parenting — increased high school completion rates by nearly 20 percent among AFDC teenagers already enrolled in school when they entered the program. Employment rates among the same group increased by 40 percent.

Teenage parents in LEAP receive an additional \$62 a month welfare benefits if they attend school regularly. But if they drop out or have too many unexcused absences, their benefit is reduced by \$62 a month.

Neither school completion nor employment rates was improved for those teenagers on welfare who had already dropped out of school when they were enrolled in the LEAP program.

and certain other circumstances, help establish paternity and obtain child support and, in some cases, attend parenting classes.

Finally, the president urged states to require that teen mothers on welfare live at home or with a responsible adult. Although states have the authority to keep teenagers on welfare at home, only 21 states, including Virginia and Maryland, have such provisions in place.

The second step will allow states to raise the benefits of teenage parents who stay in school. States can already lower benefits for teenagers who drop out of school but until now could not pay a bonus for those who stay in school without receiving a federal waiver. Last week's action removes the need for a waiver.

That approach, which has been in place in Ohio since 1989, has improved high school graduation rates significantly, according to a study released last month.

The third step orders states to require any teenage mother on welfare who has already dropped out to return to school or work toward a high school equivalency degree. These teenagers must also sign a "personal responsibility plan."

Under the plan, unmarried teenagers under age 18 receiving welfare must agree to stay at home with a legal guardian, except in abusive

# African Women Fight Abuse

Stephen Buckley in Nairobi

**A**FTER more than 30 years of being threatened, chased, slapped, thrown, punched, kicked, choked, whipped and stepped on by her husband, Agnes summoned the strength last winter to take an unusual step for an abused African wife. She left.

More unusual is that she found solace in a home in Nairobi that serves battered women. It is the first such shelter in Kenya, where spousal abuse — as in the rest of sub-Saharan Africa — is a not-so-hidden shame.

From Sudan to South Africa, from Mali to Mozambique, spousal abuse is among sub-Saharan Africa's best-known and least-discussed secrets, a problem far more pervasive but much less addressed than other social ills, such as AIDS.

Over the centuries in most African societies, battering one's wife has become both a right and a rite. In some ethnic groups, social workers say, if a man's wife dies before he has assaulted her, he must prove his manhood by beating her corpse. In addition, economic dependence on men, cynical police officers and judges, and even scorn from other women, have long forced abused wives to silently swallow their pain.

Perhaps most powerful is the African notion that the family is a bastion of privacy, in which unpleasant matters especially must be shielded from public scrutiny.

"The biggest problem is that

nobody wants to talk about it," said Anne Ngugi, director of the Women's Rights Awareness Program, or Wrap, which opened the home for battered women in which Agnes found solace. "It comes down to people feeling that [violence against women] is part of African tradition, and so people must keep quiet."

A recent survey taken by Ngugi's organization in Kenya revealed a high awareness of violence against women, but little resolve to tackle the problem.

More than 70 percent of those surveyed — both men and women — said they knew that wife beating occurred in their neighborhood. Yet nearly 60 percent of respondents said women were always or sometimes responsible for the beatings they suffered. About 51 percent said that men who batter women should not be punished.

Battered wives thus rarely go to the police. Asked how women who are being beaten should respond, only 3 percent of those surveyed said that the victim should seek help from law enforcement authorities. In rare cases that make it through Kenya's justice system, assailants typically receive a small fine.

During her three decades as a battered wife, Agnes — who is now 60 and asked not to be fully identified — never called the police. She did not tell co-workers. She did not tell friends.

"The police would have taken a bribe from my husband, and then they would have left, and he would

have beaten me again," said the former teacher. She did not tell those closest to her because "I was so scared, and I was feeling so embarrassed."

Agnes, whose husband also was a teacher, said the violence began a few years after she got married, when she caught her husband in bed with a teenage girl. He began to beat her every evening. He forced her to give him her paycheck. He called her his slave.

Activists say it is not unusual for African women to stay in such situations for decades. In most African homes, women are generally less educated than their husbands and often do not have professional skills, leaving them economically bound to the men.

"A lot of these women try to protect the marriage because marriage gives you high status," said Lucy Njeri Karuru, Kenyan coordinator for Women and Law in East Africa, a research group with offices here, in Tanzania and in Uganda. "And if they divorce, society, including their women friends, will not look upon that favorably."

Janet Kabeberi-Macharia, regional coordinator for the research group, said part of the problem is that spousal abuse falls under the general category of "physical assault" in Kenya. "A more specific law would help to let people know that this specific act is wrong. As it stands now, a lot of men — and women — think that beating your wife is something you do if you really care about her."

# Court to Review Law's Curb On Death Penalty Appeals

Joan Blakupie

**T**HE Supreme Court announced last week it will review the constitutionality of a new law limiting federal appeals by state death row prisoners. The order is likely to halt most executions in the United States for at least the next two months.

The justices, who already had finished oral arguments for the term, put the case from Georgia on an unusually expedited schedule, with oral arguments scheduled for June 3, apparently with the intent of reaching a decision before going on recess in late June. At issue is a provision of the anti-terrorism law signed by President Clinton last month intended to reduce the number of court petitions that can be filed by condemned inmates. The Supreme Court's conservative majority led by Chief Justice William H. Rehnquist has favored measures to shorten the often protracted appeals process in death penalty cases.

The court's four liberal-leaning justices protested on Friday last week that the court was taking up the matter too quickly, saying the issues "should be undertaken with the utmost deliberation, rather than unseemly haste."

The challenge to the law was made by Ellis Wayne Felker, who had been scheduled to die last week for the 1981 murder of a 19-year-old woman who met Felker while looking for a job to pay for college. Felker was convicted of raping,

sodomizing and murdering Evelyn Joy Ludlam after reportedly luring her to his home by promising her work at his leather shop. Felker, who was convicted in 1983, insists he is innocent. His execution has been postponed while the court hears the case.

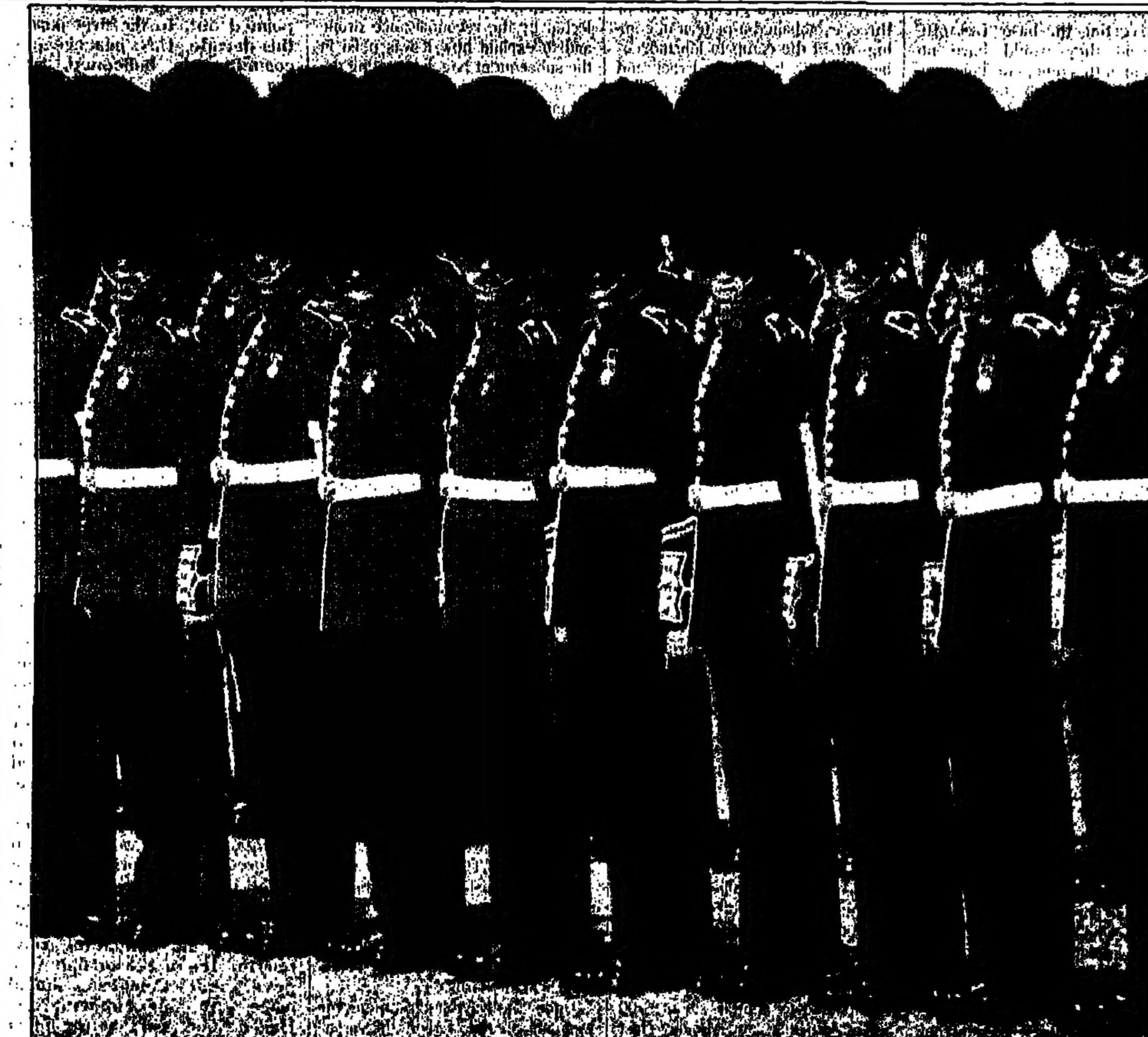
More than 3,000 prisoners are on death rows across the country. Felker's petition — the first to reach the court under the new procedures — also tests the authority of Congress to take power away from the federal courts.

The controversial provisions of the anti-terrorism statute restrict the ability of federal judges to hear state prisoner's appeals, known as petitions for writ of habeas corpus, and require judges to defer to state court determinations on whether a prisoner's constitutional rights were violated.

While the immediate effect of last week's order was to bring scheduled executions to a virtual halt, if the court upholds the law, the result actually will be fewer delays in executions because the challenged statute sets light deadlines and limits the ability of a prisoner to win last-minute federal review.

Columbia law professor James Steven Liebman, an expert in the area, said that most prisoners who are about to die attempt to get a federal court to intervene. Those closest to execution are also those most likely to be filing successive petitions and most affected by the new law.

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